

# ROTARY TRAVEL AND EXPENSE POLICY

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## I. GENERAL POLICY

This policy applies to all Rotarian Volunteers (“Volunteers”) who travel and/or incur expenses on Rotary International or The Rotary Foundation (“Rotary”) business.

Volunteers are responsible for adhering to this policy and taking an active role in being good stewards of the organization’s resources while on Rotary assignments.

Rotary will reimburse Volunteers for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred while conducting authorized Rotary business. Only pre-authorized/funded travel expenses in the service of Rotary will be paid for or reimbursed. Non-funded travel arrangements are the responsibility of the individual traveler.

In order to be reimbursed for expenses, volunteers whose attendance at a meeting, event, or other activity is funded by Rotary must fulfill their associated duties and obligations as described in the RI constitutional documents, the Rotary/Rotary Foundation Codes of Policies, or the official program of the meeting, event, or activity. Volunteers who fail to fulfill their duties and responsibilities will not be reimbursed and must return the entire sum paid to them or on their behalf in connection with the travel. Persons who travel at Rotary expense may be subject to income taxes on the value of the travel if the travel is not for bona fide business purposes. All invitations to participate in travel funded by Rotary will include reference to these requirements.

Rotary assumes no obligation to reimburse volunteers for expenses that do not comply with this policy.

All monetary amounts stated in this policy are in U.S. dollars.

In extenuating circumstances, Rotary may modify this policy to best suit the needs of the organization, as well as the safety and security of the travelers.

## II. TRAVEL

### Air Travel:

Rotary Travel Services’ authorized agents/agencies book reasonable routes at the lowest available cost in the entitled class of service, taking into account all en route travel costs, the length of travel time (as defined below in Class of Service), and Rotary’s negotiated contracts with certain airline partners. **To secure the lowest cost, you should request airline tickets at least 16 days before domestic travel and at least 24 days before international travel.** In addition:

- En route travel costs are those costs directly related to the specific itinerary/itineraries considered for the funded travel, such as the cost to travel to a larger airport farther from the traveler’s home in order to take a preferred flight/carrier.
- Travelers are strongly encouraged to use Rotary’s preferred carriers and routings whenever possible, if such achieves lowest total cost of travel and recognizes the value of the traveler’s time.
- Travelers should accept flights with up to one additional connection if that will significantly reduce the total cost of travel, while recognizing the value of the traveler’s time.
- Flights are booked no earlier than 90 days prior to departure.
- Flights are booked through the most economical airports so long as the cost of ground transportation does not increase the total cost of travel nor substantially increase the total travel time. A change of airport for flight connections shall be avoided if possible.

### **Class of Service:**

The length of total travel time is defined here as the scheduled departure of the first flight to the scheduled arrival of the last flight.

Rotary-funded travelers must make use of the lowest reasonable economy airfare which will serve the Rotary/Rotary Foundation purposes of the journey while providing reasonable comfort and taking into account all en route travel costs and the value of the travelers' time.

Rotary Senior Leaders may make use of upgrades to the class of service for which they are eligible, as listed below, but may always elect to travel at a less expensive class.

First class, if business class sleeper seats are not offered:

- President
- President-elect
- Trustee chair
- Partners of the above when traveling at Rotary's expense

Business class or premium cabin equivalent on flights with a total travel time of longer than four hours:

- Rotary International directors
- Rotary Foundation trustees
- President-nominee
- Past Presidents
- Past Trustee Chairs
- General Secretary
- Directors-elect, effective 1 January of the year the director-elect is to take office
- Incoming Trustees in conjunction with their preparation, beginning 1 January of the year preceding
- Aides to the President, President-elect, Trustee Chair, and Trustee Chair-Elect
- Convention speakers authorized by the Rotary International President
- Major award recipients authorized by the Rotary International President
- Partners of the above when traveling at Rotary's expense

Past Directors, Trustees, General Secretaries\*\* and their partners when traveling at Rotary's expense; and, when traveling for their role, the current Convention Committee Chair, International Assembly Moderator, International Assembly Assistant Moderator, and their partners when traveling at Rotary's expense, are eligible for:

- Premium Economy or similar, when available, on flights with total travel time longer than four hours. Business class or premium cabin equivalent on flights with a total travel time of longer than eight hours

*\*\* Past General Secretaries when serving as an official representative of Rotary International at the request of the President*

**Note:** *In emergency situations, the general secretary is permitted to authorize purchase of any class of service to secure the safe evacuation of Rotary-funded travelers.*

## **Arrival and Departure:**

Generally, travelers arriving for official meetings may book their travel so they arrive one day before the first meeting date. However, there are several exceptions:

- Those whose scheduled flights cannot arrive before 15:00 the day before a meeting (beginning at 09:00 or earlier) may arrive two days prior, only if traveling 4,000 km/2,500 mi or further, or whose total travel time is eight hours or more.
- Travelers arriving from destinations 8,000 km/5,000 mi or further, or whose total travel time is fourteen hours or more, may arrive two days prior to the first meeting date.
- Committee chairs may arrive two days before.
- Past presidents traveling more than 4,000 km/2,500 mi, or whose total travel time is eight hours or more, for the Rotary International Convention may arrive two days before the start.

The costs of lodging, meals, and general travel expenses for travelers observing these arrival requirements are the responsibility of Rotary. Travelers who arrive earlier than provided in these guidelines or who stay longer than one night after their last official meeting must pay their own expenses\*.

\* These guidelines do not apply to travel to the International Assembly, International Convention, and Council on Legislation, as travel policy may be modified to best meet the objectives of those meetings.

## **Hotel Accommodations**

- Hotel arrangements are to be booked or pre-approved by Rotary-designated agents/agencies except where the funded accommodations are pre-arranged by the conveners.

## **Day Rooms/Forced Overnights:**

- If your international travel itinerary requires a connection time exceeding seven hours, Rotary's authorized agents/agency will book a day room for you, and the expense is reimbursable.
- If your travel itinerary requires an overnight stay, Rotary's authorized agents/agency will book a reasonably priced hotel room for you, and the expense is reimbursable.

A forced overnight becomes necessary if flight schedules make it impossible for a traveler to arrive or depart at a reasonable date or time before or after the assignment. Also, depending on flight schedules, a forced overnight may occur in a city other than the one where the assignment is located. Forced overnight accommodations do not apply for personal travel before or after the assignment\*. Certain meetings may have their own policy regarding forced overnights.

*\*Example: Your assignment allows you to arrive two days prior due to distance or time, but you request arrival three days prior. Because of the personal travel extension, you are no longer eligible for a forced overnight and will only be reimbursed for one night prior to your assignment.*

## **Local Purchase:**

Local purchase may only be approved in rare circumstances, such as when Rotary's authorized agents/agency are unable to book certain air carriers or routes. Rotary's authorized agents/agency are able to assist with booking upgrades, personal extensions, and alternate air carriers. These may be at the personal expense of the traveler.

In some cases, travelers may have found a lower airfare but will only be authorized for local purchase if that airfare is at least \$300 lower than the Rotary-designated agency airfare, and submitted with your travel request. Authorization requires an official travel itinerary indicating flight numbers, flight times, airline, and total cost sent to Rotary's designated agents/agency email address. To determine your total travel costs, be sure to also include parking fees, mileage, tolls, ferry crossing fees, etc. along with the request for local purchase. If approved, the

traveler will be reimbursed for the authorized amount only after completing the trip and submitting applicable receipts with a Rotary expense statement\*.

*\*If the Rotary assignment is cancelled for any reason, the local purchase ticket will not be reimbursed.*

### **Frequent-Flyer Programs:**

Rotary-funded travelers who use frequent-flyer miles to purchase tickets or upgrades are not eligible for reimbursement by Rotary, except for their out-of-pocket costs (e.g., taxes and service fees). Flights purchased with frequent flyer mileage may only be booked by the traveler but still require pre-approval by Travel Services. Any frequent-flyer miles earned through tickets purchased by Rotary will be credited to the account(s) of the individual traveler.

### **Personal Travel:**

Travelers are responsible for the cost of any personal travel, including service fees, booked in conjunction with authorized Rotary travel.

The purpose of Rotary funded travel is to support only bona fide business purposes. Travel should not be utilized to present a personal travel opportunity to the travelers. The General Secretary shall implement rules specific to assuring compliance with US tax Code.

### **Other Forms of Transportation:**

#### **Non-Commercial Air Travel**

- When commercial air service is available, transportation by other means is prohibited.
- When commercial air service is **not** available, transportation by other means must be approved by Rotary Travel Services ([travelservices@rotary.org](mailto:travelservices@rotary.org)) prior to the trip.

Other means of air service may include charter (noncommercial operations with a professional crew) or personal aircraft (noncommercial operation with a non-professional crew).

If alternative means of transportation is approved, the traveler will be required to provide the following documentation and send to [insurance@rotary.org](mailto:insurance@rotary.org) before the trip:

- If taking a chartered flight, request from the chartering company (primary operator):
  - Certificate of Insurance naming RI and TRF as Additional Insured with a Waiver of Subrogation
- If taking a non-professionally crewed flight (personal aircraft), provide:
  - Certificate of insurance (COI) evidencing at minimum \$USD 5M liability coverage with RI and TRF as Additional Insureds

Funded travelers authorized to use personal aircraft will be required to sign a waiver of liability.

#### **Non-Air Transportation**

- If air service is not available, travelers should select the most economical form of transportation (e.g., personal vehicle, train, bus, ferry).
  - If anticipated round-trip (non-air) travel costs exceed USD \$350, Rotary Travel Services' authorization is required. To determine your pre-approval travel costs, your request should include parking fees, mileage, tolls, ferry crossing fees, etc.
- Travelers should select the most economical mode of transportation to and from airports. If it is anticipated that round-trip airport transportation will exceed US\$150, prior approval by Travel Services is required.
- Authorized travel by personal automobile will be reimbursed for the distance driven on a per mile/kilometer rate as set by Rotary on a country-by-country basis. This rate covers the cost of fuel; therefore, fuel costs should not be listed as a separate expense.

Roundtrip mileage costs exceeding \$350 require Rotary Travel Services authorization. If air or train service is not available but the traveler drives without prior Rotary Travel Services authorization, the round-trip reimbursement will be capped at \$350.

**Note:** *Mileage rates are subject to change. Travel Services uses the most recent Rotary mileage rates when determining reimbursement.*

- Air travelers will be reimbursed for a car rental at their destination if using a rental car is less expensive than other transportation, such as taxis, airport limousines, and airport shuttles. Rental car reservations must be made through Rotary-designated agents/agencies or will not be reimbursed.

**Note:** *For more information about using rental cars or personal vehicles during your assignment, please review the Car Rental & Personal Vehicle information sheet on [MyRotary under Travel & Expenses](#).*

### III. BUSINESS EXPENSES

Rotary will reimburse volunteers for legitimate and reasonable business expenses incurred while conducting authorized Rotary business assignments. Expenses cannot be reimbursed until after the completion of the assignment for which they were incurred.

To obtain reimbursement for business expenses, volunteers must submit an expense report via Rotary's online expense system within 60 days of completing their Rotary funded assignment and/or incurring the expense. Expense reports must explain the business purpose of each entry and include all required documentation in order to be reimbursed.

#### **Eligible Expenses:**

Volunteers should use their best judgment to ensure that expenses are as economical as possible. As a Rotary volunteer, you are expected to adhere to this policy and understand Rotary's expectations for reasonable expenses prior to incurring them.

Some examples of reimbursable expenses are listed below. This list is not exhaustive. Please also refer to the Rotary Code of Policies as some expenses which may generally be considered as ineligible may be eligible depending upon your role or circumstances. If you're not sure whether something is eligible for reimbursement, please ask your Rotary staff liaison or Rotary's Accounts Payable team before incurring the expense.

#### **Transportation-related Expenses:**

- **Airline tickets:** Volunteer airfare must be booked through Rotary Travel Services designated agents/agencies. See prior Travel section for details related to air travel.
- **Hotels/Lodging:** The cost of moderately priced, standard hotel rooms will be reimbursed at a level appropriate to the area, provided that the rooms are booked by Rotary-designated agents/agencies. Itemized hotel bills are required to document the expense. Refer to the policy above for information about forced overnights/day rooms.
- **Baggage fees:** Fees for a maximum of two bags at standard airline weight limit will be reimbursed, with applicable receipts. *Note: Charges for overweight and excess baggage will not be reimbursed.*
- **Visa fees** (if required for travel assignment): Travel related fees (i.e.; airfare, hotel, etc.) to obtain a visa required for your funded assignment adheres to the same process as funded travel. Third party visa service assistance fees may not be reimbursed unless required and preapproved by Travel Services.

- **Disease prevention, testing or treatment supplies:** Only if necessary for business-related travel (e.g., malaria medication may be reimbursable with business justification and prior approval by Travel Services). All other generally used over-the-counter medicines, treatments or healthcare products, such as indigestion relief, sunscreen, or cold medicines, will be considered non-reimbursable.
- **Transportation to and from airport (or other terminal):** The most economical transportation (personal automobile, train, bus, taxi) will be reimbursed. Limousines, hired drivers, etc., typically would not be the most economical. If driving a personal car is the most economical option for getting to the airport/bus/rail terminal, you can request reimbursement for mileage expenses, tolls, and parking fees in a long-term lot.
- **Taxis, rideshare services, shuttle buses, parking, tolls:** for the most economical option.
- **Rental cars:** when less expensive than other transportation modes (e.g., taxis, rideshare, airport limousines, airport shuttles) and booked through Rotary designated agencies/agents. See *Car Rental & Personal Vehicle information sheet* on the [Travel and Expense page on MyRotary](#) for more information on rental cars. When renting vehicles in the U.S., its territories and possessions, and in Canada, insurance coverage is provided through Rotary's auto insurance. Rotary will not reimburse the cost of Collision Damage Waiver or Personal Accident Insurance on rental cars, when the coverage is provided by Rotary.
- **Mileage:** Authorized travel by personal automobile will be reimbursed for the distance driven on a per mile/kilometer rate as set by Rotary on a country-by-country basis. This rate covers the cost of fuel; therefore, fuel costs should not be listed as a separate expense. Round-trip mileage costs exceeding \$350 require Rotary Travel Services authorization. If air or train service is not available but the traveler drives without prior Rotary Travel Services authorization, the round-trip reimbursement will be capped at \$350.

***Note:** Mileage rates are subject to change.*

### **Other Expenses:**

- **Meals/Snacks/Beverages:**<sup>1</sup> The cost of reasonably priced meals will be reimbursed based on the location of the assignment. Meal costs can vary widely based on circumstances, so it is recommended that Volunteers use their best judgement to ensure costs are reasonable.
  - Volunteers should use the daily M&IE Rates located here [https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per\\_diem.asp](https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp) as the basis for the daily maximum.
  - The daily maximum meal reimbursement limits per person include any combination of meals, snacks, beverages, tax and tips.
  - In all circumstances: Itemized receipts are required for any meal/snack over \$75. Credit card slips are not sufficient for reimbursement of meal expenses.
  - If paying for a meal for other individuals, all individuals present must be listed on the expense report.

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<sup>1</sup> These guidelines may not apply to meals at the International Assembly, International Convention, or Council on Legislation, as policy may be modified to best meet the objectives of those meetings.

- **Note:** *If attendance at an official function is mandatory and meals are served at that function, Rotary will not reimburse the costs of any other food or beverage.*
- **Laundry/dry cleaning:** Reasonable expenses for laundry or dry cleaning. Refer to laundry/cleaning item under the ineligible expenses list for more specifics.
- **Registration fees:** for Rotary-specific events, as required for role/assignment.
- **Supplies:** Including stationery, badges, plaques, awards, materials, copies, printed items, if required for business assignment.
- **Tips/gratuities:** Tips for hotel/airport staff, wait staff and drivers are allowable when appropriate and customary. Normally, tips will be no more than 15 percent to 20 percent of the bill, excluding sales tax.
- **Telephone/Internet fees:** with business purpose. Receipt/documentation of detailed charges is required regardless of dollar amount.

### **Ineligible Expenses:**

The following are examples of expenses that are not reimbursable. (*Note that this list is not exhaustive*):

- **Airline club memberships**
- **Local purchase of any airfare:** without Travel Services pre-approval.
- **Other forms of transportation:** Amounts over \$350 without Travel Services pre-approval
- **Frequent-Flyer miles/upgrades:** Rotary-funded travelers who use frequent-flyer miles to purchase tickets or upgrades are not eligible for reimbursement by Rotary, except for their out-of-pocket costs (e.g., taxes and service fees).
- **Home Share Accommodations:** Overnight accommodations such as Airbnb, VRBO, etc., will not be reimbursable. Hotel accommodations must be booked through Rotary's designated agents/agency.
- **Car Sharing/Car Clubs:** Rental vehicles such as Zip Car, etc., will not be reimbursable. Refer to the Car Rental and Personal Information Sheet under [Travel & Expenses on MyRotary](#).
- **Travel Medical & Accident Insurance:** Rotary provides travel medical & accident insurance to funded volunteers. The cost of any supplemental travel insurance coverage is the responsibility of the traveler and will not be reimbursed by Rotary.
  - If you are not a funded volunteer, you will need to purchase travel insurance at your own cost. Please consult an insurance advisor regarding your travel insurance needs. The cost of any supplemental insurance coverage is the responsibility of the traveler and will not be reimbursed by Rotary.
- **Lost luggage:** Rotary does not take responsibility for any lost luggage. A claim should be filed directly with the airline for reimbursement.
- **Overweight and/or excess baggage fees**
- **Laundry/dry cleaning:**
  - Before or after Rotary travel
  - During an assignment of less than five days
  - On the last day of an assignment
- Annual fees, late fees or interest fees for personal credit cards
- Auto repairs
- Child care
- Clothing
- Entertainment/recreational reading materials
- Hairdresser services

- Health club fees
  - In-room/in-flight movies
  - Luggage purchases
  - Parking tickets or traffic violations
  - Personal items such as toiletries, medical supplies, personal hygiene products, umbrellas
  - Loss or theft of personal items including stolen cash
  - Pet care
  - Saunas, massages, other spa services
  - Souvenirs or personal gifts
  - Contributions or donations to political campaigns or other advocacy groups
- Expenses:** submitted more than 60 days after they were incurred may only be reimbursed with an approved exception request and explanation regarding why they were submitted late.
- **Expenses:** submitted more than 1 year after they were incurred will not be reimbursed.

***Note:** Expenses are reimbursable only to the extent that they are not lavish or extravagant under the circumstances, and in compliance with all policies mentioned in this document. Rotary reserves the right to deny or reduce reimbursement of items which do not comply with this policy. If you are unsure whether an expense is reimbursable, please contact Accounts Payable and/or your staff liaison.*

#### **Partner Expenses:**

Rotary will fund partner (as defined in the Rotary Code of Policies) expenses only if the partner's travel/expenses are for legitimate Rotary business (with pre-approval from the staff liaison). Use Rotary's Partner Funded Travel Expenses Form to substantiate the business purpose of partner travel, along with the reimbursement amount. Partner expenses should be authorized by your Rotary staff liaison before they are incurred. For partners accompanying Rotarians on multiple travel segments, partner travel expenses will only be eligible for reimbursement if the partner incurred those expenses while conducting official Rotary business on approved and funded Rotary assignments. Any additional costs for partners accompanying Rotarians on multiple travel assignments beyond the partner funded portion will be at the personal expense of the Rotarian.

#### **Documentation**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining proper documentation. Documentation for expenses should be legible and should show the amount, date, place, general character of each expense, and include proof of payment.

For information regarding receipts/documentation refer to the documentation guidelines on the [Travel & Expense page of MyRotary](#).

***Note: Exceptions to this policy can only be approved by the General Secretary. Please send written requests to the Rotary Travel Services Manager (travel-related) or Rotary Accounts Payable Manager (expense-related) who will submit them for approval.***

## **IV. RESOURCES**

Your Rotary staff liaison is your first point of contact for questions related to your travel assignment or reimbursement of expenses. Many resource materials related to travel and expense reports are posted on Rotary.org under My Rotary > Manage > [Travel and Expense](#) section.

