

Travel Cost Comparison Guide

Overview

Per [Travel Policy](#), travelers should incur the lowest reasonable travel expenses that meet business need and exercise care to avoid impropriety and/or appearance of impropriety.

A cost comparison is documentation collected PRIOR to purchasing travel expenses to demonstrate any variance in costs. Documentation must demonstrate a clear separation of expenses to ensure that no personal expenses are paid or reimbursed by the university. Appropriate documentation includes the [Travel Comparison Worksheet](#), along with airfare/vehicle quotes from contracted suppliers or their online tools.

Documentation must be attached to the Spend Authorization when travel plans deviate from the standard mode of transportation established by the unit or when personal travel is being added to a business travel.

Costs determined by the comparison that exceed the most economic option, create additional liability risks or that are not part of business travel will not be paid or reimbursed by the university.

Select Comparison Type for Guidance:

[Personal Travel in Conjunction with Business Travel Cost Comparison \(Airfare\)](#)

[Drive vs. Fly Cost Comparison](#)

[Mileage vs. Rental Vehicle Cost Comparison](#)

Tools & Resources:

[Travel Website](#)

[University Contracted Travel Agencies](#)

[Concur Online Booking Tool](#)

[University Contracted Rental Car Agencies](#)

[Mileage Rate](#)

[Travel Comparison Worksheet](#)

Personal Travel in Conjunction with Business Travel Cost Comparison (Airfare)

[\[Back to top\]](#)

Where do I pull the Airfare Cost Comparison Quote?

The airfare cost comparison quote should be pulled from the applicable [University Contracted Travel Agency](#) or the [Concur Online Booking Tool](#):

- Contact a full-service agent and request a quote that includes (1) the cost of business travel only and a separate quote that includes (2) the cost of business travel with the flight deviation that includes personal dates/locations.
- Alternately, the traveler (or their arranger) can pull a quote in Concur that includes (1) the cost of business travel only and a separate quote that includes (2) the cost of business travel with the flight deviation that includes personal dates/locations.

*The cost comparison quotes should include the date the quote was run and the lowest reasonable coach/economy fare in respect to both the business portion and the business/personal portion. [See steps to run quote and example.](#)

When should I pull the Cost Comparison Quote?

A cost comparison quote **must** always be pulled before the airfare purchase and should be pulled no more than 24 hours (when reasonably possible) from the actual flight purchase date.

How is Airfare paid for when it's combined with business and personal travel?

All business travel airfare for employees **must** be purchased through the applicable [University Contracted Travel Agency](#). The following payment options may be considered when combining business and personal travel:

- The Best Practice Standard is to purchase the combined business/personal airfare on a personal credit card and be reimbursed for the business airfare portion only (as supported by the quote and receipt); or
- When the airline permits, airfare for combined business/personal travel can be purchased on the university's airfare credit card with the University's Contracted Travel Agency for the business portion, and the personal portion can be purchased on a personal credit card; or
- The combined business/personal airfare can be fully purchased on the university's credit card with the University's Contracted Travel Agency, but the personal portion must be returned to the university by check within 7 business days of purchase.

What Cost Comparison Documentation is required and where do I store it?

Required Documentation:

- Business Airfare Quote (from the University's Contracted Travel Agency) demonstrating the cost for airfare based on the business travel date/locations only. Must be lowest reasonable coach/economy fare for domestic or lowest reasonable business class fare for international with 5 consecutive hours
- Personal Airfare with Business Airfare Quote (from the University's Contracted Travel Agency) demonstrating the cost for airfare based on the combined business and personal travel date/locations. Must be lowest reasonable coach/economy fare for domestic or lowest reasonable business class fare for international with 5 consecutive hours
- Completed [Travel Comparison Worksheet](#) to identify other cost segregation for personal travel in conjunction with business travel
- Other applicable support documentation

Documentation Retention Location:

- Attach to the Spend Authorization associated with the trip estimates
- Attach to the Expense Report associated with the airfare expense

Personal Travel in Conjunction with Business Travel Cost Comparison (Airfare)

[\[Back to top\]](#)

Steps to Run Airfare Cost Comparison Quotes	
<p>Example using Full-Service Agent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter estimated airfare cost in Spend Authorization • Call Full-Service Agent within 24 hours of actual flight purchase • Confirm your Employee ID as traveler/arranger • Identify name of OSU traveler • Advise that you are seeking a quote for 2 different itineraries that meet policy requirements • Airfare itinerary quote for the actual business dates/destination • Airfare itinerary quote for the combined business and personal dates/destination • Request itinerary quotes be emailed to the traveler/arranger for support documentation • Complete Travel Comparison Worksheet • Edit Spend Authorization by attaching both itinerary quotes, Travel Comparison Worksheet and add comments to identify inclusion of personal with business travel • Make actual airfare purchase (with an APPROVED Spend Authorization #) within 24 hours of collecting cost comparison quote 	<p>Example using Concur Online Booking Tool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter estimated airfare cost in Spend Authorization • Login to Concur as traveler/arranger within 24 hours of actual flight purchase <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Enter flight criteria for actual business dates/destination – at search results, select flight that meets policy and then click on Print/Email link to email to the traveler/arranger (2) Repeat the same steps with a new search for the combined business and personal dates/destination and then click on Print/Email link to email to the traveler/arranger • Complete Travel Comparison Worksheet • Edit Spend Authorization by attaching both itinerary quotes, Travel Comparison Worksheet and add comments to identify inclusion of personal with business travel • Make actual airfare purchase (with an APPROVED Spend Authorization #) within 24 hours of collecting cost comparison quote

Drive vs. Fly Cost Comparison

[\[Back to top\]](#)

Can I Drive to my Business Travel Destination instead of Flying?

Driving may be considered as the primary means of transportation to the business travel destination **IF** the cost does not exceed the least expensive airfare and meets the business needs of the university. Other costs associated with driving (e.g., tolls, additional days of travel) must be considered.

Considerations should be made to the most cost-efficient option when using own vehicle (mileage) or a rental vehicle (daily rate plus gas). Liability [risks](#) should be considered when electing to drive a personal vehicle during business travel.

*The cost comparison quote for airfare should include the date the quote was run and the lowest reasonable coach/economy fare in respect to both the business travel dates/destination.

What Cost Comparison Documentation is required and where do I store it?

Required Documentation:

- Business Airfare Quote (from the University's Contracted Travel Agency) demonstrating the cost for airfare based on the business travel date/locations only. Must be lowest reasonable coach/economy fare.
- Mileage Calculation (# of miles x [mileage rate](#)) **OR** [Vehicle Rental](#) Quote from the University's Contracted Rental Car Agency.
- Completed [Travel Comparison Worksheet](#) to document cost breakdown by Driving or by Flying.
- Other applicable support documentation

Documentation Retention Location:

- Attach to the Spend Authorization associated with the trip estimates
- Attach to the Expense Report associated with the transportation expense

Mileage vs. Rental Vehicle Cost Comparison

[\[Back to top\]](#)

Can I Drive my own Vehicle or use a Rental Vehicle for transportation to my Business Travel Destination?

Considerations should be made to the most cost-efficient option when using own vehicle (mileage) or a rental vehicle (daily rate plus gas). Liability [risks](#) should be considered when electing to drive a personal vehicle during business travel.

What Cost Comparison Documentation is required and where do I store it?

Required Documentation:

- Mileage Calculation (# of miles x [mileage rate](#))
- [Vehicle Rental](#) Quote from the University's Contracted Rental Car Agency.
- Completed [Travel Comparison Worksheet](#) to identify cost breakdown by Mileage Rate (with own vehicle) or by Rental Vehicle.
- Other applicable support documentation

Documentation Retention Location:

- Attach to the Spend Authorization associated with the trip estimates
- Attach to the Expense Report associated with the transportation expense