Airfare

- Does the University have contracts with certain airlines?
  - No. Individual departments may choose to open a business or customer account with a particular airline and thereby receive discounted airfares. Keep in mind normal purchasing procedures apply to any purchase of airfare accommodations exceeding $2,500, i.e. obtaining quotes.
Airfare

- The travel agent can only hold the ticket and accompanying airfare for 24 hours. I am unable to receive travel request approval and purchase order approval in time before the 24 hours ends and thus the airfare increases. How can I get around this problem?

- A travel request is an estimate. As soon as word is received that travel is to take place, start preparing the travel request with estimates and begin routing for approvals. By the time the airfare purchase order is being created, hopefully the travel request is already approved. Purchase order approval should follow quickly in time to meet the travel agent’s deadline.

- A travel request is an estimate. As soon as word is received that travel is to take place, start preparing the travel request with estimates and begin routing for approvals. Provided the traveler’s principal investigator and department chair have approved the travel request, a scanned copy of the travel request along with the itinerary can be emailed to the Fiscal Officer. With these approvals on hand, the Fiscal Officer can review and approve accompanying purchase orders, e.g. airfare.
Can airfare be purchased on P-Cards?

Provided the Principal Investigator (Supervisor) and Department Chair have approved the travel and there is a travel request number on hand, departments may contact the Fiscal Office for assistance with purchasing airfare via P-Card.
The traveler is a 6’ 2” individual and is uncomfortable sitting in an economy class seat. Can we pay for a higher class seat?

No. Travel procedures require economy airfare accommodations, i.e. coach class. Travelers may choose a higher class seat with the understanding that the University will only reimburse the coach class fare. Special considerations are given to individuals with medical conditions. A doctor’s note would be required to justify reimbursement in these situations.
Airfare

- How early is a traveler permitted to arrive at the business location?
- Travel time should be reasonable. Unfortunately, there is no guideline with a specific number of hours for faculty and APT employees. Reasonableness will ultimately depend on the business destination. As a guideline, civil service employees are permitted to arrive at their business destination a minimum of 10 hours prior to the start of the business activity.
Airfare

- Multiple travelers are going to the same conference. One of the travelers purchased a cheaper airfare itinerary that gets him/her home sooner than the other traveler (although the flights are quite early in the morning). Should the other traveler be held to the same itinerary and be reimbursed accordingly?

- Travel time should be reasonable. As the approving authority, the Principal Investigator or Department Chair can make a determination as to how quickly they want their employees to return home as well as how much funds are to be committed for the travel. Deferring to the Principal Investigator or Department Chair to make a determination in the above situation would be best.
Airfare

- Are layovers permitted, especially if the trip is to a very faraway business destination, e.g. Africa?

- Travel by air should be the most direct route whenever possible. Granted, trips to foreign locations do take a substantial amount of time and thus layovers may be inevitable. Provided there are no other flights available, these layovers and their accompanying lodging and M&IE expenses should be reimbursable.
Airfare

- Should business-only itineraries mirror actual itineraries, e.g. including the same stopovers, or should the alternate business itinerary be a more direct itinerary?
- Travel procedures require travelers to take the most direct route possible. Business-only itineraries should be the most direct route possible with the least amount of stopovers. Consideration should be given to all flights on all carriers as much as possible.
Airfare

- Some boarding passes are sent electronically to the traveler’s cell phone and the traveler has a hard time printing a hard copy. Can a statement be given instead?

- Assuming the boarding passes are sent to the traveler’s email account, the traveler should log into their email account from a regular computer or laptop and print the boarding passes.
Lodging

- For domestic US travel, when determining if lodging quotes are needed, if the base hotel rate equals the FAR, are quotes still needed?
  - No. Excess lodging is not being incurred in this instance and therefore no quotes are required. The added room taxes will make the actual lodging rate appear to be greater than the FAR when completing the travel forms. In these instances, a notation should be made to explain that the base lodging rate is equal to the FAR and that excess lodging is not being incurred.
Lodging

- When obtaining lodging quotes, will an average nightly rate quote suffice or are night-by-night quotes required?
- A nightly average rate quote is sufficient.
Lodging

- When comparing star ratings for hotels, is it mandatory that the star ratings be exactly the same?
- No. As much as possible though, hotels with the same star ratings should be compared. However, there may not be enough hotels with the same star rating within the general vicinity of the business function. In these situations, comparison of hotels with similar but not same star ratings is sufficient.
Lodging

- When comparing hotels with the same star rating, is there a barometer regarding distance between hotels that is acceptable?
- No. As there may not be enough hotels with the same star rating within the general vicinity of the business function to compare, comparison of hotels with similar but not same star ratings is sufficient.
Lodging

- If the conference hotel is only $10 or $20 more expensive than neighboring hotels, can we justifying staying in the hotel since it’s where the conference will be located?
- Lodging quotes are necessary to justify staying in any hotel that exceeds the FAR. In the absence of lodging quotes, justification for staying in the conference hotel can include cost considerations, e.g. additional ground transportation costs to and from the conference hotel, as well as safety considerations.
Lodging

- Does the University have contracts with certain hotels in the State of Hawaii or in the mainland?
  - No. Individual departments may choose to open a business or customer account with a particular hotel and thereby receive discounted hotel rates. Keep in mind normal purchasing procedures apply to any purchase of lodging accommodations exceeding $2,500, i.e. obtaining quotes.
Lodging

- When staying at a hotel that doesn’t provide an official printed receipt, such as a bed and breakfast or a foreign location that doesn’t possess the proper technology to produce such a receipt, sometimes a written receipt/statement is provided certifying that traveler paid and payment was received in full. Is this sufficient? Is a bank statement or copy of a cancelled check also required? What if the traveler paid in cash?

- In the absence of an official printed receipt, a written receipt/statement from the vendor certifying that the traveler paid is sufficient. Such statement should include the following: 1) name of payee, 2) list of charges, 3) method of payment, 4) amount paid.
Meals

- If the conference fee includes all meals (at no additional cost) every day of the conference, should the traveler’s M&IE be reduced?
- No. As long as the meals are included in the conference fee and are not an option, the traveler is entitled to claim the full M&IE.
Meals

- If the hotel includes a continental breakfast each morning at no additional cost, should the traveler’s M&IE be reduced?
- No. As long as the continental breakfast is included in the hotel charge and is not an option, the traveler is entitled to claim the full M&IE.
Meals

- In a duplicate meal payment situation, on a conference registration form, if the cost for the selected meal ($20) is greater than that meal’s corresponding share of the daily M&IE allowance ($15), do we still reimburse the conference meal ($20)?

- Yes. The traveler wins out in this particular situation. The traveler would receive the $20 reimbursement as part of their conference/registration fee. M&IE would be reduced by $15.
Meals

- In a duplicate meal payment situation, should a meal reduction be based on the entire M&IE allowance or just the meal portion excluding the incidental portion?
- Just the meal portion of the M&IE allowance. Travelers are still entitled to the incidental portion. For a breakdown between the meal and the incidental portions of the M&IE rate, refer to the FAR website and look for the ** footnote indicating “Breakdown of M&IE Expenses.”
Meals

While on a business trip, a traveler has a business dinner with several peers. Can the traveler claim reimbursement for this business dinner? Can this claim be done on the travel completion form?

The traveler’s portion of the business dinner cannot be claimed since the traveler is receiving M&IE. The traveler can claim for the remaining portion of the business dinner via UH requisition with a pre-approved OPRPM Form 136 or RCUH Reimbursement for Cash Purchases with a pre-approved OPRPM Form 56.

AVIS TEAM: We are not 100% in agreement in our answer. Two members would limit the reimbursement to the FAR. One member would pay the actual cost since the APM does not state that the FAR is the limit.
The traveler is a 6’ 2” individual and is uncomfortable sitting in a compact/sub-compact vehicle. Can we pay for a bigger vehicle?

No. Travel procedures require economy car rental accommodations, i.e. compact/sub-compact vehicles. Travelers may choose a bigger vehicle with the understanding that the University will only reimburse the compact/sub-compact cost. Special considerations are given to individuals with medical conditions. A doctor’s note would be required to justify reimbursement in these situations.
Package Deals

- Am I required to break down the cost of a package deal?
- No. At minimum, a breakdown of what expenses are covered in the package deal should be provided, e.g. airfare, lodging, etc. Package deals are normally cheaper than purchasing items separately, therefore, it is not necessary to determine the cost breakdown of the expenses covered.
Internet

- Some airlines offer internet (wi-fi) for a charge. Are travelers permitted to claim this expense?
- Provided such internet use is for business purposes, traveler may claim for such internet charges.
Mileage

- Is mileage claim to/from the Honolulu airport permissible?
  - Yes. Refer to APM A8.852 for more information.
Documentation/Supports

- Does a copy of the travel request and all its supports need to be submitted together with the travel completion?
- No. The travel request is already on file at the Fiscal Office.
Documentation/Supports

- Do all pages of the FAR printout for a particular state need to be submitted or will the single page with the particular business destination suffice?
- The single page with the particular business destination will suffice. If not apparent, please identify and label the applicable M&IE rate, Lodging rate, and Lodging month.
Documentation/Supports

- What justification is needed for travel requests that are submitted late?
- Memo? Email?
Approvals/Routing for Signatures

- PIs at JABSOM wear many hats for many different organizations such as UCERA, KMS, HRP, etc. in addition to JABSOM. Who is the appropriate supervisor to sign off for travel documents?
- Assuming the travel is for JABSOM business in their role as a JABSOM employee, the PI’s department chair should sign as supervisor on the travel document.
Approvals/Routing for Signatures

- What is the routing procedure for Department Chairs’ travel documents?
- Have the Department Chair sign as traveler. Route the travel documents to the Fiscal Office. The Fiscal Office will work with the Dean’s Office to obtain the Dean’s approval as the Department Chair’s supervisor.
Processing Time

- How soon does a Fiscal Officer review and process travel requests/advances and travel completions?
- Departments/Programs should expect to hear from their Fiscal Officer within five business days with either requests for clarification/additional documentation or confirmation that document was processed.