

Air Travel and Use of Mileage Bonuses

(Adopted by Oregon State Board of Higher Education, Meeting #592, October 19, 1990, pp. 538-540; amended Meeting #622, September 24, 1993, pp. 407-410; amended [in response to Senate Bill 271] Meeting #649, January 19, 1996, pp. 23-25.)

Historical Perspective

On October 19, 1990, the Board of Higher Education adopted the staff recommendation to identify frequent flyer bonuses as part of the employment package for unclassified employees, available to employees to use as they choose. The Board's decision to adopt that policy was based on a number of factors, including the cost/benefit ratio associated with OUS1 attempts to recover travel awards.

The 1993 State Legislature, by House Bill 2496, declared that employees and state officials may not use travel awards earned while conducting state business for personal travel, as of November 1993. This overrides the Board's earlier policy.

Therefore, in September 1993, the Board amended the policy to read:

The Board of Higher Education requires all employees on Oregon University System business to travel using routes, schedules, and airlines that provide the lowest rates and the most efficient travel. However, because the cost in recordkeeping outweighs the nominal monetary benefit to the System, the System will not attempt to recapture airline bonuses awarded employees for frequent flyer miles. Because it is the policy of the State of Oregon to prohibit employees from using travel awards earned on state business for subsequent personal travel and that violation of this policy is a violation of the state ethics statute ORS 244.040 (effective November 4, 1993), employees may decline to accrue frequent flyer awards while on state business unless otherwise required as a prerequisite to receipt of federal or other grant funds. In cases where an employee elects to accumulate travel awards on state business to be subsequently used for state business, the employee should create a separate travel awards account solely used for state business travel, since OUS support staff may not be assigned recordkeeping responsibilities.

Current Policy

Travel Paid by Outside Source

Outside entities may reimburse the campus, pay a service provider directly, or reimburse an employee for travel expenses related to OUS business. If the service provider is paid directly, or if reimbursement is made to an employee, documentation should be maintained in the campus travel records. Documentation should include the traveler's name, identity of the outside source, travel destination, travel dates, and OUS business purpose. If reimbursement is made to the campus, it should be accounted for as a reduction of expense. When a travel reimbursement payment is made by the foundation,

it must be reported by the foundation to the president annually as required by OAR 580-46-035(6)(d).

Travel Awards and Frequent Fiver Mileage

All employees are required to travel using routes, schedules, and airlines that provide the lowest rates and most efficient travel. Because the cost of recordkeeping outweighs any monetary benefit, OUS will not recapture airline bonuses awarded employees for frequent flyer miles. Employees may use frequent flyer bonuses as they choose unless the terms of a grant or contract require otherwise.