

# Travel Policy

Version 3.3 (2024-03-20)

## Concepts

1. As a not-for-profit organization, The Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams, Inc. ("FIRST") recognizes the need to be fiscally prudent with its funds, while covering the value of travel expenses for conducting face-to-face meetings, provide training, represent FIRST and inviting key individuals to participate at events.
2. FIRST will administer a fair and equitable travel policy that enables it to conduct business while setting reasonable controls on expenses.
3. Unless a specific exception policy exists for a particular program or event, this policy applies to all travels using FIRST funds.

## Responsibilities and Use Restrictions

FIRST will provide reimbursement in accordance with the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

## Policy

1. **Travel for FIRST business may be funded by FIRST, must be authorized either by an approved budget item or by a vote of the FIRST Board of Directors prior to travel authorization.**
2. **Individuals with authorization for travel may:**
  - 2.1. Make travel arrangements, using whatever personal or business discounts are reasonably available at the time;
  - 2.2. Request reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred prior to travel, such as airfare (as described below).

- 2.3. If personal/business charges are incurred, all such charges will be submitted within 60 days after travel has taken place, for reimbursement. Exceptions may be approved by the CFO with notification to the Board. To be reimbursed during the current year, requests must be submitted before the 20th of December.

### **3. Class of service**

- 3.1. FIRST will reimburse Coach/Economy Class service (or equivalent) for all modes of transport;
- 3.2. Individuals are allowed to use their own travel-class upgrade opportunities;
- 3.3. Exceptions to Class of Service are authorized by a vote of the FIRST Board of Directors for hardship cases, health reasons, etc., on a case-by-case basis, prior to travel arrangements.
- 3.4. FIRST will reimburse cost for economy plus / premium economy for flights or if one flight has more than six (6) hours actual airtime. If the premium economy price is more than 30% of the economy price, authorization is required prior to travel.
- 3.5. FIRST will cover the cost for one (1) checked bag if not included in the ticket. Additional baggage charges must be approved in advance.
- 3.6. Bookings should be made as far in advance as possible, so that the lowest available rates can be utilized.
- 3.7. Non-refundable tickets are encouraged for scheduled FIRST activities, so that the lowest available rates can be utilized.
- 3.8. Travelers may choose their own airline and flight itinerary to optimize travel time, fewest connections, etc., towards the goal of overall cost reduction.
- 3.9. FIRST travelers are allowed to "double up" their FIRST travel with other business travel. In such cases, airfare can be shared on a pro-rated basis between the different expense categories.

#### **4. Cancellation policy**

- 4.1. If the whole trip, or part of it, must be canceled you must inform first-sec@first.org as soon as possible.

#### **5. Expenses**

- 5.1. Reasonable reimbursable expenses include travel, ground transportation, hotel accommodations, and incidentals. The Board may also approve fees for visas and vaccination if required. The Board must explicitly approve all travel and fees in advance and the CFO will approve all expenses.
- 5.2. Meal reimbursements will be handled on a per diem basis. The Board, on a city-by-city basis, will normally announce the per diem meal rate per day in advance in accordance with the rates on the US Department of State website for Non-US Travel or the US Department of Defense website:
- US Per Diem Rates -  
<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
  - Non-US Per Diem Rates -  
[https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per\\_diem.asp](https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp)
  - MI&E Breakdown:  
[https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=114&menu\\_id=92](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=114&menu_id=92)
- 5.3. When attended events include meal service at no extra cost to the traveler, the traveler is encouraged to participate. In such cases, a prorated amount (see MI&E Breakdown above) should be subtracted from each day's per diem rate as appropriate. Similarly, when meals are paid by FIRST, the traveler must subtract the pro-rated per diem from their travel claim for reimbursement, as appropriate.
- 5.4. Day of travel is pro-rated at 75% of the total MI&E per diem rate.
- 5.5. Mileage reimbursement for travelers using their own vehicle will be provided based on the reference rate of the traveler's country (point of origin for travel). Estimate to be provided by the traveler in advance for approval.
- 5.6. All other authorized travel expenses are reimbursed on an actual cost basis.

## **6. Reimbursement**

- 6.1. All expense reports (see below) to be submitted to ap@first.org for approval by the fund holder, and then by the FIRST CFO. The Chair must approve the CFO's expenses.
- 6.2. The fund holder verifies all expenses for conformance with the FIRST travel policy (this document) and recommends their approval to the CFO (or returns to traveler for modification and re-submittal until acceptable).
- 6.3. Travelers are reimbursed for approved expenses on a timely basis (approximately 14 days) after approval.
- 6.4. Expenses and reimbursements will generally be conducted in US Dollars, but other arrangements can be made at the discretion of the CFO. In a case when reimbursement is done in a different currency from USD the exchange rate is set by the traveler expenses or the exchange rate on the day of reimbursement will be used.

## **7. Expense reports**

- 7.1. All expenses are to be tracked and documented in a FIRST-approved format.
- 7.2. Each expense must be noted and adequately described. When expenses are shared among travelers (e.g., sharing a taxi to an airport), the expense should be thus noted.
- 7.3. Any expense of US\$25 or more will require a receipt in order to be reimbursed, with the exception of meal per diem. If no receipt is possible, the traveler must provide a thorough explanation and justification in the expense report with a missing receipt form.
- 7.4. Receipts will be scanned and submitted (electronically) with all expense reports.
- 7.5. Bank fees for incoming wire transfers from FIRST may be submitted for reimbursement in the expense report. It is the responsibility of the traveler to include this charge with the original request.

## **8. Travel Incentives**

- 8.1. Employees, contractors and volunteers traveling on FIRST expenses (either direct reimbursement or participating in group bookings) are permitted to collect loyalty points, miles and other benefits into their private account. These miles and points may be used for future travel for FIRST.
- 8.2. Incentives (miles, points, cashback, etc.) earned on FIRST group bookings of five or more travelers, must be disclosed to the Executive Director and FIRST Secretariat. When possible, incentives for group bookings must go into an account that may be used for future FIRST travel.

## **9. The Board, on a case-by-case basis, may grant exceptions to this policy.**