



TRAVEL 101

PLEASE READ:

Failure to comply with the policies listed below will result in Non-Payment of Travel.

First you must complete one of two forms which authorizes you to travel on business.

1. VA Form 0893
or
2. RIVR Travel Request Form

Choosing the correct Travel Authorization Form....

If you are a VA Employee: You have 2 options.

- RIVR Travel Request Form: Use this form if taking Annual Leave for ALL days of your trip that you would normally be at work.
- or
- VA Form 0893: VA employees planning on using VA Travel time (this form takes ~3 weeks to go through the VA process of approval and must be done **PRIOR** to travel...no exceptions)

**A VA Employee must either take Annual Leave or do VA Travel.
Authorized Absence is NEVER an option!!!**

If you are an RIVR Employee: You only have 1 option

- RIVR Travel Request Form

Once you have determined which travel authorization form to fill out you need signatures!

Nothing can be reimbursed unless ALL the proper signatures are obtained on your travel request form.

1. RIVR Authorization Form (4 signatures required): Person traveling, Supervisor, the person whose account is being charged which is often the supervisor and an RIVR official.
2. VA Authorization Form 0893 (4 signatures required): Person traveling, Supervisor, General Counsel & Chief of Staff. Getting all these signatures takes time and must be done **prior** to travel.

Since RIVR staff are NOT VA employees, we do not know the specifics of the VA Form 0893 process. We know it can take up to 3 weeks to obtain all the signatures, but the Richmond Institute for Veterans Research (RIVR) cannot reimburse you or make travel arrangements for you without this form in hand. We suggest reaching out to you AO for assistance.

Regardless of the type of Travel Authorization form you completed, please turn in the fully signed document to the RIVR Office (3D-144) prior to travel.



Making Travel Arrangements once you have approval

If you have any questions about whether an expense may or may not be covered, please seek approval prior to your departure date.

Registrations

RIVR can pay for event registrations, or you can register yourself and then RIVR will reimburse you.

Registrations can be reimbursed prior to your trip.

Air Travel

You can make your own airline reservations or use our travel agent.

Your travel must BE APPROVED by RIVR prior to contacting the Covington Travel Agency.

We will provide the travel agent's contact # once you turn in your signed authorization forms.

Only Coach airfare is approved unless circumstances warrant a First class/Business ticket.

Reason for First Class/ Business Airfare

Typically flights in which you are in the air over 3 hours.

When bundled with domestic/international flights.

Documented medical reason

Hotel

Hotel reservations are usually made directly by you. If booking the hotel is a financial hardship please contact RIVR, so we can assist.

Lodging limit is \$400/day. If a conference hotel exceeds our limit, we will allow this overage with proof showing your hotel is the official conference hotel.

Ask the hotel for an itemized receipt when you checkout.

Turn in your itemized receipt upon your return home. RIVR cannot reimburse for extras on your hotel bill like movies, spa treatments, alcohol, etc.

Ground Transportation

We do not allow rental cars unless you obtain prior approval.

Most people use Uber/Lyft, etc. We will only approve rental cars if cheaper than Uber/Lyft, but this must be approved prior to travel.

Keep and turn in your receipts for cabs, tolls, airport parking

Mileage

We will pay the listed government mileage rate from your home to the airport (and back).



Meals

For meals we DO NOT require receipts, we reference the federal per diem rates [Per Diem Rates](#) | [GSA](#).

When you are ready to turn in your receipts and get reimbursed.

- Complete an RIVR Travel [Reimbursement](#) Form
- The hotel receipt must be itemized (showing all charges)
- We need receipts for cabs, airport parking, tolls, baggage fees unless already included into your ticket cost.
- We will accept electronic receipts when necessary (often used with Airlines, Uber, Lyft).
- We do not require meal receipts.
- If you order room service that will be factored into your \$80/day meal amounts.
- **YOU MUST SIGN the bottom of the reimbursement form.**

A special note for VA employees only:

If you took VA Travel...you MUST log into Concur and LEAF and enter your trip. RIVR cannot assist with this process.

There is a travel group where you can ask questions: VHARICFISConcur@va.gov

For VA Travel special consideration will be given when travel approval has been suspended by the VA, due to a terrorist attack, government shutdown or circumstances that are unforeseeable by the traveler or RIVR. In these cases, RIVR will grant permission to the traveler to be paid for the time spent to attend the function provided they have taken ANNUAL LEAVE.

Let me know if you have questions. Travel can be a complicated thing and is closely looked at when audited.

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