

# SOUTH FLORIDA VA FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH & EDUCATION

## Travel Policies & Procedures

### Policy:

If justifiable under the Foundation's mission, Foundation funds may be used to support domestic or foreign travel expenses to bona fide scientific meetings or for other research and/or educational conferences, seminars, etc.

Travel charged to a research or educational account must be limited to purposes that relate to that project account's research/educational activity.

Travel that will be chargeable to the principal investigator's (PI) administrative account for activities not directly related to research or educational activities will be considered if they support the training and education mission of the MVAHCS as they relate to the PI's MVAHCS role .

Travel chargeable to the Foundation's Administrative accounts must also be justifiable under the mission of the Foundation.

### Procedure:

#### 1. Notification:

For domestic travel forms are to be completed/submitted a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to travel. For international travel the traveler should notify the Foundation as soon as it is know but no less than six (6) weeks in advance.

#### 2. Forms:

##### 1. Administrative Absence forms:

- a. For Foundation employees; SF71, "*Request for Leave or Approved Absence*":

You are responsible for requesting administrative absence (AA) leave and approval in advance using SF71. This confirms you are on official work detail for insurance purposes. AA will be reported on the employee's time sheet to which the SF71 will be attached.

- b. For VA employees; Form 0893, "*Advance Review of Offer to Donate Support for Official Travel*":

All Foundation supported travel for VA employees must be pre-approved in accordance with the appropriate policies of the Veterans' Health Administration (a request for authorized absence). This approval allows VA salaried employees to travel on Authorized Leave.

You are responsible for completing Form 0893 if you plan to use "Authorized Absence" to attend any meeting.

Attach a copy of your travel orders to the Foundation Travel Request form if you are receiving government travel orders OR a printout of Approved Leave (VISTA) if you are not receiving government travel orders.

**2. Request for Travel Funds form:**

Is to be used to determine if funds are available in the funding account and if they are reserve those funds for travel. Current per diem travel rates can be found at:

**[http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=17943&contentType=GSA\\_BASIC](http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=17943&contentType=GSA_BASIC)**

The following must be attached, documented or requested:

- a. A copy of program material (i.e. program agenda, syllabus, etc.) or meeting documents (i.e. email correspondence, invitation, etc.).
- b. A copy of the abstract/paper, which acknowledges the VA and/or Foundation, and the acceptance letter if making a presentation.
- c. Registration/Conference Fees: For the Foundation to pay registration fees directly, check the "yes" box by "Registration" on the Request for Travel form. You must include a completed registration form and submit the entire travel packet at least two (2) weeks prior to any registration deadline with the deadline date noted on the request form.
- d. Airline Reservations: If you would like the Foundation to make the airline reservations directly, please submit the preferred itinerary must be submitted along with the acceptable time ranges for each direction of travel. SFVAFRE will try to accommodate your preferences.

NOTE: Persons traveling on Foundation funds may not use government rate airfares. All Foundation paid airfare will be purchased at the basic coach rate. If you make changes to your ticket and there is a fee associated with this change, you and/or your project will be charged for the change(s). Generally, the cost of air travel is reduced with a Saturday overnight stay. If you can document that the cost for the hotel/per diem for the extra day is equal to or less than the difference in air travel with the Saturday overnight stay, you may be approved to take advantage of this option.

- e. Cash Advances: will be granted in very rare instances based on need, generally to cover the ME&I (Meals and Incidentals) per diem. If you request an advance that exceeds the cumulative per diem, must also attach a hardship justification.

**3. Travel Reimbursement form:**

Following return from travel ALL travelers must complete and submit a Travel Reimbursement form with original receipts attached for all items (including those prepaid by the Foundation) to be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses. The form should be submitted to SFVAFRE no later than two (2) weeks after the travel has been completed. If there are no issues with Travel Voucher the Foundation will make every effort to reimburse the traveler within two (2) weeks of submission.