

**Please note that for 2020, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, travel to and for educational conferences was suspended as of April 2020. When educational travel is officially reinstated, we will post on our website and remove this notation from this policy.**

**Thank you for your understanding.**

**RESIDENT TRAVEL, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
EXPENSES, AND REIMBURSEMENT (2020 - 2021)**

The UT College of Medicine Chattanooga provides each department with professional development funds to support Resident\* education during training in our Graduate Medical Education (GME) Programs. These funds are intended to educationally benefit Residents during our GME Programs and not something to be purchased in the final months of training for use at another institution or in your next practice.

The UT College of Medicine Chattanooga encourages Residents to attend national or regional educational conferences (including board reviews) each year. Given available funding, each department is provided funds to be used to support Resident professional development; however, the amount available for each Resident is left to the discretion of each Department Chair and Program Director. **It is the responsibility of each Department to communicate amounts available to each trainee and monitor that department totals are not exceeded.**

Reimbursement must be within the University fiscal policies, including Travel Policy and Guidelines. Departments should provide a list of amounts allocated for each Resident at each level to the Director of Finance and Administration and the GME Financial Specialist before July 1 of each year.

In order to be reimbursed for any professional development expenses approved by the department, it is the Resident's ultimate responsibility to adhere to the University fiscal policies. Residents must submit original receipts to the Residency Coordinator for processing. It is the responsibility of each Residency Coordinator to assist Residents in securing pre-approval for educational travel and for preparing travel expense reports and with receipts to the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga GME Financial Specialist for reimbursement.

**Depending upon each program's guidelines and decision about the amount of funds available for Residents and which PGY levels may receive reimbursement, listed below are educational items and expenses considered appropriate professional development expenses:**

Approved reimbursable expenses if funds are available:

- 1) Travel expenses to approved CME conferences **planned by ACCME accredited providers**. Conferences should be in a specialty related to the Resident's training and career plans and must be in the continental US or the national meeting of a specialty society or organization. Prior travel authorization and review of the conference brochure or website details must be documented by the department. **It is recommended that**

**travel be arranged through the University of Tennessee recognized travel agency, World Travel, to ensure that all University policies are followed.**

- 2) Electronic or web-based educational materials
- 3) Video course registration
- 4) Hard copy medical-related books
- 5) Board Reviews (hard copy, CD-ROM, online, etc.)
- 6) USMLE Step 3 Prep Course or materials
- 7) Membership fee for specialty organizations
- 8) USMLE Step 3 registration fee\*
- 9) Smart phone
- 10) iPad or similar tablet
- 11) Laptop computer
- 12) Small medical equipment such as a stethoscope, surgical loupes, or neural reflex hammer

**Non-approved expenses (may include but are not limited to the following):**

- 1) Certification board exam fees
- 2) Medical license fees
- 3) Printers, including palmtops
- 4) Digital cameras
- 5) Smart watches
- 6) Travel not related to approved educational conferences

Purchase and reimbursement for these educational and professional development expenses must be approved by the Chair and/or Program Director, accompanied by original receipts, and an appropriate expense form must be provided by the Resident and Residency Program Coordinator. Once receipts and expenses have been approved and submitted within the University financial system (IRIS), reimbursement will be processed and payment will be issued via direct deposit into your primary bank account on file.

Receipts and expenses should be submitted **within 30 days of purchase of items or travel** during the year.

**The deadline for submitting all Resident reimbursement receipts, explanations, and travel expense reports to the Business Office each academic year is April 1, with the exception of travel that has been pre-approved but has not yet occurred by April 1.**

**Books and Other Educational Materials Reimbursement**

For books or other items purchased, receipts must indicate that the order is complete and that payment has been made – not just that the item has been ordered. **A copy of a bank statement is not proof of a book purchase or travel expense and is not acceptable by the University as an original receipt.**

**It is the responsibility of the traveler to review and follow all UT travel policies before making arrangements and traveling.**

**UT Travel and Reimbursement Guidelines – Click on the link to view the University of Tennessee Travel Policies and Guidelines: [http://policy.tennessee.edu/fiscal\\_policy/fi0705/](http://policy.tennessee.edu/fiscal_policy/fi0705/)**

**Interactive forms that must be completed online at the above policy link are:**

- **Travel Authorization Form (T-18)**
- **Travel Expense Worksheet (T3)**

**Again, it is advisable that travel arrangements be made through World Travel, out of Knoxville, since it is recognized by the University and helps ensure adherence to the University of Tennessee Travel Policies.**

**To access World Travel information:**

- <http://www.worldtrav.com/client-portal-login>
- Use the following information to log in –
  - Username: ut
  - Password: govols
- Or call World Travel in Knoxville (856.777.1680)

**University of Tennessee travel and reimbursement guidelines must be followed. A foundation will not be reimbursed for payment made on behalf of the Resident. Receipts must be in the Resident's.**

### **Conference and Travel Approval**

Prior to attending a conference or traveling on behalf of the University, the Resident must have the conference and travel pre-approved by the Department Chair or Program Director, and the Associate Dean/DIO for the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga. A copy of the conference brochure must be submitted with the **UT Travel Authorization Form (T-18)**. Travel should be approved at least one month prior to traveling so the Resident may obtain the best airfare or hotel rates. The form will be returned to the Residency Program Coordinator after the DIO signs it. Once the Resident has returned from the conference, he/she must submit **original receipts** to the Residency Program Coordinator as soon as possible but no later than 2 weeks from his/her return. The Coordinator will prepare a **UT Travel Expense Report (T-3)**, signed by the Resident and the Program Director or Chair to the GME Financial Specialist of the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga. All documentation should be submitted within 30 days of the ending date of the conference or the Resident and the Coordinator will be required to submit a written explanation as to why this requirement was not followed.

**The University of Tennessee System Accounting Office, not the Graduate Medical Education Department or the local Office of Finance and Administration, makes the final determination as to interpretation of the UT Travel Policy and what is acceptable.**

### **Travel Package Deals (such as Expedia, Hotwire, etc.)**

The UT College of Medicine Chattanooga has determined that Residents may not use a travel package deal for travel arrangements (airfare, lodging, etc.). Examples include bundled airfare, lodging, and rental car since appropriate receipts and breakdown of expenses cannot be identified in the documentation for these packages.

### **Hotel Reimbursement**

A hotel receipt when a Resident has attended a conference must show a \$zero balance. If you stay at the Conference Hotel, you may be reimbursed up to the conference rate plus taxes, given you have available funds, but you must include the brochure or web page that details the conference hotel rate. If the room block at the conference rate is full or if you waited until after the deadline to reserve your room, you will not be reimbursed more than the conference rate to stay at an alternative location. The hotel receipt must be in your name. If you split the charges with another Resident, you must get the hotel to give each of you a receipt in our own name to be reimbursed. If you do not stay at the conference hotel, you will be reimbursed for up to the federal per diem plus taxes for that city and state (US GSA Federal Conus Rates at [www.gsa.gov/perdiem](http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem)). The UT Travel agency, World Travel, can assist you with finding alternative hotels.

### **Airfare**

You must attach a copy of your receipt that includes your itinerary, the cost of the ticket with a \$zero balance, and the designation or code for coach fare. An original receipt is required for baggage fee reimbursement. If arrangements and approvals are submitted far enough in advance, the University may be able to arrange direct billing for coach fare flights.

### **Rental Car**

**Residents will not be reimbursed for car rental unless they receive prior approval from the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga Director of Finance and Administration and can document that the cost of taxis or airport shuttle would exceed car rental during the conference.** If the Director of Finance and Administration approves a rental car prior to the trip, then when submitting receipts, the Resident and Coordinator must attach a paid rental car receipt with the travel expense form. The University will not reimburse for insurance or other extra charges such as GPS. The original gas receipts for reimbursement must be attached if claiming that expense. Going through World Travel for these arrangements will ensure that you get the lowest rates possible, but should only be arranged if the Director of Finance and Administration has given her approval.

### **Mileage**

If you drive your personal car to a conference, you may be reimbursed the current mileage rate (currently \$.47 per mile). You must attach a Good Maps or comparable document to show mileage from your home address to the hotel.

### **Taxis or Toll**

Taxis or tolls that are under \$50 do not require a receipt. Any amount \$50 or more must have an original receipt attached. You must state where you went; e.g., airport to hotel or conference center.

### **Food**

You do not need to attach receipts for food. The University reimburses a per diem amount based on the city and state to which you traveled for the conference ([www.gsa.gov/perdiem](http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem)).

**Other**

You must attach original receipts and an explanation for any other individual expenses related to the travel that you feel should be reimbursed.

\*The term “Resident” refers to both Resident and Fellow trainees.

Revised and Approved by the GMEC 3/20/2018. Administrative edits 5/8/2019 and 6/16/2020.