**INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL POLICY**

**PURPOSE**

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] is dedicated to ensuring the safety and security of its employees, including during international travel undertaken as part of their job responsibilities. While such travel is often essential to [EMPLOYER'S NAME]’s operations, it may involve risks such as exposure to illness, accidents, political instability, natural disasters, and increased information security threats.

By engaging in proper planning and adhering to specific precautions before, during, and after international travel, [EMPLOYER'S NAME] and its employees can effectively manage and mitigate these risks. This policy outlines the procedures and best practices designed to minimize potential hazards associated with international travel.

All employees traveling internationally for [EMPLOYER'S NAME] are required to review and adhere to this policy, as well as comply with all applicable [EMPLOYER'S NAME] policies while abroad[, including, but not limited to, [POLICY NAMES]].

This policy applies to all U.S.-based employees traveling on [EMPLOYER'S NAME] business outside the United States. It does not apply to personal travel[ or [OTHER LIMITATIONS]].

All practices outlined in this policy comply with applicable Maryland state laws and regulations.

**APPROVAL**

Employees must obtain prior [written] approval for any business travel outside the United States in accordance with the following procedures:

Travel to low-risk regions

* An employee planning travel to a country or region [with no U.S. State Department travel advisory of [NUMBERS]/categorized as [RISK LEVEL]] must obtain approval from [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]] before making travel arrangements or incurring any travel-related expenses.

Travel to high-risk regions

* An employee planning travel to a country or region with [a U.S. State Department travel advisory of [NUMBERS]/categorized as [RISK LEVEL]] must obtain approval from [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]] before making travel arrangements or incurring any travel-related expenses.

Travel advisory information

* For details about [travel advisories/risk categories], employees should consult [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]].

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] reserves the right to withdraw approval for international travel at any time, based on changing circumstances or risks.

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] ensures that all decisions regarding the assignment, approval, or withdrawal of international travel comply with anti-discrimination laws and do not consider any legally protected characteristics. For more details, refer to [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s [Equal Employment Opportunity Policy/[POLICY NAME]].

This policy incorporates Maryland state law considerations for employees traveling internationally on business.

**GUIDELINES FOR TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND REIMBURSEMENT**

Preferred travel providers

Employees [may/must] arrange transportation and lodging through [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s preferred providers: [PREFERRED PROVIDER(S) NAME(S)]. Preferred providers can be [accessed/contacted] by [visiting/calling/emailing] [[INTRANET LOCATION]/[CONTACT INFORMATION]].

If travel arrangements are not made through [PREFERRED PROVIDER(S)], employees must obtain prior [written] approval from [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]] before booking travel or incurring related expenses.

**AIR TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

Coach travel requirements

Employees must book the lowest-priced coach airfare available, taking into account factors such as preferred airports, travel schedules, connection times, and potential fees for cancellations or changes.

Premium fare exceptions

Reimbursement for premium fares (e.g., business-class or first-class) is permitted only under the following circumstances:

* Flights exceeding [NUMBER] hours in duration.
* Situations pre-approved by [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]].
* [OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES].

Employees [must/should] secure [written] pre-approval for premium fares from [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]].

Baggage fees

Checked baggage fees are reimbursable in the following instances:

* When transporting materials belonging to [EMPLOYER'S NAME].
* For trips lasting longer than [NUMBER] days.
* When pre-approved by [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]].

Frequent flyer programs

Employees may retain frequent flyer miles accrued from business travel for personal use. However, reimbursement will not be provided for tickets purchased using frequent flyer miles.

Changes and cancellations

Penalties or charges for flight cancellations or changes will be reimbursed only under the following conditions:

* [CIRCUMSTANCES].

OR

* [EMPLOYER'S NAME] will determine reimbursement eligibility based on specific circumstances, including [CIRCUMSTANCES].

**AUTOMOBILE AND GROUND TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES**

Use of personal vehicles

When employees are required to use personal vehicles for business purposes, such as traveling to or from the airport, [EMPLOYER'S NAME] will reimburse mileage at the IRS-approved rate ([as of [DATE], $[AMOUNT] per mile]). Additionally, tolls and parking fees incurred during business travel are reimbursable. However, the following expenses will not be reimbursed:

* Parking tickets.
* Vehicle repairs, maintenance, or enhancements.
* Fines for moving violations.
* Towing charges.

Employees using personal vehicles for business travel should ensure their automobile insurance covers business-related activities.

Rental cars

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] will reimburse employees for the reasonable costs of rental cars used for business purposes, including expenses for gasoline, tolls, and parking. Employees are expected to reserve economy or standard-sized vehicles unless otherwise approved in advance by [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]], such as when additional space is required for multiple passengers.

[EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s insurance covers both the employee and the rental vehicle for business travel, so employees should not purchase additional insurance from the rental car provider.

Employees are prohibited from driving or renting vehicles for business travel if they cannot understand the language used on traffic signs in the destination region.

Ground transportation

Reasonable and ordinary costs for ground transportation are reimbursable, including buses, shuttles, taxis, and car services. This applies to transportation to and from airports or train stations, as well as between hotels and other business-related destinations.

**RAIL TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

Employees may choose rail travel if it is more cost-effective than air travel. When booking rail tickets, employees are expected to select the lowest reasonable fare available, considering factors such as:

* Preferred arrival and departure times.
* Connection times.
* Applicable restrictions, including cancellation and change fees.

Reimbursement for penalties or charges related to cancellations or changes follows the same rules as those outlined for air transportation in this policy.

**LODGING AND ACCOMMODATION GUIDELINES**

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] will reimburse employees for standard accommodations at reasonably priced hotels during business trips. To qualify for reimbursement, employees must submit an itemized hotel receipt or statement indicating full payment, which includes:

* The name and location of the hotel or lodging.
* The date(s) of the stay.
* Separate charges for lodging, meals, telephone, internet access, and other expenses.

Maximum rates and pre-approval

In certain locations, a maximum nightly rate applies, including a limit of $[AMOUNT] per night in [LOCATION]. Employees must obtain prior [written] approval from [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]] before incurring lodging expenses that exceed the specified maximum for any location.

Preferred hotels

For travel to [LOCATION(S)], employees must stay at one of the following hotels, where [EMPLOYER'S NAME] has negotiated discounted rates:

* [HOTEL NAMES].

Room cancellations

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] will reimburse room cancellation fees for guaranteed reservations only under extenuating circumstances, as determined at [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s sole discretion.

VAT reclamation

In some countries, [EMPLOYER'S NAME] may be eligible for Value Added Tax (VAT) reimbursement on hotel stays. Employees should contact [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]] to confirm eligibility and ensure that original hotel receipts are retained and submitted when applicable.

**MEAL REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES**

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] will reimburse employees for reasonable meal expenses incurred during overnight travel or when an employee is away from their normal work location for an entire day, [subject to a maximum of $[AMOUNT] per day].

However, [EMPLOYER'S NAME] will not reimburse expenses for meals deemed, at its sole discretion, to be lavish or extravagant[, nor for the cost of alcoholic beverages].

Receipts and documentation

Employees must provide receipts or other appropriate documentation for each meal purchased during the trip[, unless the cost of the meal is below $[AMOUNT]]. Reimbursable meal expenses may include reasonable gratuities [of up to [NUMBER]%].

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to meals purchased for business entertainment purposes. Reimbursement for such meals is governed by [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s [Travel and Business Expense Reimbursement Policy/[POLICY NAME]].

**BUSINESS COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES**

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] will reimburse employees for reasonable business-related communication expenses incurred during travel, including:

* Phone calls.
* Wi-Fi or internet service fees.
* Faxes.
* Business-related shipments or mailings.

Documentation requirements

Employees must provide receipts or other substantiating documentation that itemize costs and identify the parties contacted.

Hotel phone use

Employees should avoid making direct-dialed calls from hotel rooms[, unless it is a local call]. Instead, they are encouraged to use cost-efficient alternatives, such as:

* Credit cards or calling cards.
* Internet-based calling platforms.
* Public phones or collect calls when appropriate.

Mobile device phone usage

Employees must consult with [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[EMPLOYER]'s [PREFERRED PROVIDER(S)]] to select the most suitable cellular service option for international travel. Options may include:

* Limiting mobile call and data usage by activating airplane mode and connecting to Wi-Fi.
* Adding an international calling plan to a business-use device.
* Purchasing or renting a local "pay as you go" mobile device in the destination country.
* [Using internet calling platforms or applications.]
* Obtaining a satellite phone, where necessary.

Internet access

Employees are encouraged to use Wi-Fi or other internet access at approved hotels, where it is often included. Internet-based calling, such as Voice over IP (VoIP) applications like [Zoom/[OTHER APPLICATION(S)]], is preferred for voice communication whenever available and permissible.

**COMPANY-ISSUED CREDIT CARD USAGE**

Employees traveling internationally must use their [EMPLOYER'S NAME]-issued credit cards for business-related expenses wherever they are accepted.

One key benefit of using a company-issued credit card is that foreign currency conversions are handled directly by the credit card company. This ensures:

* Both the foreign currency amount and the equivalent U.S. dollar amount appear on the billing statement.
* Simplified reconciliation and documentation of expenses.

Employees are encouraged to use these cards for all eligible transactions to streamline expense reporting and ensure compliance with [EMPLOYER'S NAME]’s travel policies.

**INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL SAFETY GUIDELINES**

Employees traveling internationally to destinations with potential safety concerns must consult with [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]/[PREFERRED PROVIDER]] to evaluate and select the safest options for ground transportation and lodging.

Examples of safety considerations

* In certain regions, chartered or chauffeured vehicles may be safer than local taxis.
* Hotel locations should be chosen based on security assessments and proximity to business locations.

By taking these precautions, [EMPLOYER'S NAME] aims to prioritize employee safety during international travel while maintaining operational efficiency.

**PASSPORTS, VISAS AND VACCINATIONS**

Expenses related to obtaining required documentation for international business travel are reimbursable under this policy. This includes:

* Passport application or renewal fees.
* Visa application fees.
* Vaccination costs necessary for travel to specific destinations.

Employees must retain and submit receipts or other substantiating documentation to process reimbursement.

**EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT AND CURRENCY CONVERSION GUIDELINES**

Employees must adhere to the reimbursement procedures outlined in [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s [Expense Reimbursement Policy/[POLICY NAME]].

Currency conversion for reimbursements

When submitting reimbursement requests for international travel expenses, employees must:

* Convert all expenses to U.S. dollars prior to submission.
* Specify the currency conversion rates used for each transaction, ensuring the rates reflect those in effect at the time of the transaction, not at the time of reimbursement submission.

Additional guidelines

* For trips lasting one week or less, employees may calculate an average currency rate for simplicity.
* For travel to multiple countries, employees must report the applicable conversion rates for each country and expense.

**VISA AND PASSPORT REQUIREMENTS**

Passport validity

Employees traveling internationally must ensure their passport meets the following requirements:

* Valid for at least six (6) months beyond the scheduled return date.
* Contains at least three (3) blank visa pages.

Visa requirements

Employees traveling on business must obtain the appropriate business visa or equivalent prior to departure. Travel on a tourist visa is strictly prohibited for business purposes. For assistance or further details, contact [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]].

Reimbursable expenses

Expenses related to obtaining or renewing a business visa or passport for work travel are reimbursable under the guidelines outlined [above/in [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s [Travel and Business Expense Reimbursement Policy/[POLICY NAME]]].

Trusted resources and vendors

Employees should obtain instructions and forms for passports from the official U.S. State Department website (www.state.gov). Non-government websites should not be used for visa or passport information, and non-contracted vendors should not be engaged for visa processing.

Document copies

To ensure preparedness, employees should make photocopies of the following:

* Passport.
* Driver’s license.
* Other relevant travel documents.

Copies should be stored separately from the originals to protect against loss or theft.

**DATA AND INFORMATION SECURITY GUIDELINES**

Adhering to [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s data and information security policies is critical while traveling internationally[, as outlined in [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s [POLICY NAME] Policy]. In addition to these general requirements, all employees must follow the specific precautions below before, during, and after their trip.

Before leaving

* Only bring company electronic devices if necessary for the trip.
* For laptops, consider requesting a loaner device from the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department.
* For mobile phones:
	+ Obtain a loaner device through [DEPARTMENT NAME] or an authorized provider.
	+ If using a personal device, back up data, erase sensitive information, and enable password protection.
* [Disable nonessential features, such as cameras and microphones, on all devices.]
* [ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS].

During travel

* Use secure remote access procedures (e.g., Virtual Private Network (VPN)) for all internet activity.
* Stay vigilant in public spaces, such as airplanes, trains, or cafes:
	+ Never leave devices or files unattended.
	+ Ensure confidential information is not visible to others; use a privacy screen on laptops.
	+ Avoid confidential conversations in public places, including taxis or other transport.
* Secure company property (e.g., by using hotel safes).
* Use strong passwords and encryption programs for files and emails.
* Install and maintain updated anti-virus software to scan devices.
* Be cautious of phishing attempts via email, phone calls, or other scams.
* Log off, power down devices, and terminate network connections when not in use.
* Store sensitive information on removable, encryption-protected storage devices, such as external hard drives or USB sticks, whenever possible.
* Report incidents, including stolen devices or searches conducted by customs or law enforcement, to the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department promptly.
* [ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS].

When returning

* Scan electronic devices for malware or malicious software.
* Change any passwords used during the trip.
* Report suspicious activities or findings to the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department.
* [ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS].

Need assistance?

For questions regarding information security before, during, or after international travel, please contact the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES**

[EMPLOYER'S NAME] is dedicated to ensuring the health, safety, and security of its employees during international business travel. Employees must notify [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]/[PREFERRED PROVIDER]] prior to making travel arrangements. This team will assess potential health and safety risks at the destination and assist with safe travel preparations.

Available resources

As part of its commitment to employee well-being, [EMPLOYER'S NAME] provides the following resources for international travelers:

* [RESOURCES OFFERED].

Emergency preparedness and precautions

To minimize risks and prepare for potential emergencies, employees should take the following steps:

*Research and plan*

* Review travel advisories and alerts issued by the U.S. Department of State (DOS), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and World Health Organization (WHO) concerning global health concerns, political climates, natural disasters, and crime at the destination. For assistance, contact [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION].
* Consult a personal healthcare provider at least two weeks before departure to discuss:
	+ Recommended vaccinations and preventive medications.
	+ Health concerns related to remote areas or developing countries.
* Health and hygiene:
	+ Learn about potential infectious diseases in the region, including symptoms and prevention methods.
	+ Carry a personal travel medical or first aid kit.
	+ Familiarize yourself with local health issues, including hygiene and dietary precautions (e.g., safe water and food practices).
* Safety tools and programs:
	+ Enroll in the DOS Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive updated safety and security information and facilitate contact with the U.S. Embassy in emergencies. Enrollment details are available at [www.state.gov](https://www.state.gov).
	+ Review written guidance from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and CDC on international travel practices. Guidance is [attached to this policy/available on request from [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]].
* Insurance and emergency information:
	+ Verify your personal travel and medical insurance coverage.
	+ Carry emergency contact details and review the "EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION" section of this policy.
* General caution:
	+ Always act prudently, comply with [EMPLOYER'S NAME] policies, and abide by local laws while traveling.

Addressing concerns

Employees with health and safety concerns related to their international travel should contact [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]] to discuss and resolve these issues.

[ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONS].

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

To ensure employees can be reached during emergencies while traveling internationally, the following steps should be taken:

1. Provide travel itinerary and contact details:
	1. Employees must share their travel itinerary and up-to-date contact information with their manager [and [ADDITIONAL INDIVIDUALS OR DEPARTMENTS]] before departure.
	2. Any changes to the itinerary or contact details must be communicated promptly.
2. Employees should keep accessible the contact information for the following individuals and entities:
	1. The employee’s manager.
	2. A human resources representative.
	3. Personal contacts at [EMPLOYER'S NAME] or the destination location.
	4. A representative from [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department].
	5. [EMPLOYER'S NAME]’s [PREFERRED PROVIDER(S)].
	6. [EMPLOYER'S NAME]/[EMPLOYER'S PARTNER]’s [24-HOUR MEDICAL OR SECURITY ASSISTANCE HOTLINE].
	7. The hotel where the employee is staying.
	8. Local police.
	9. The U.S. embassy or consulate in the destination country.
3. Employees should ensure their emergency contact information on file with [EMPLOYER'S NAME] is complete and up to date.

By following these guidelines, employees can be prepared to handle emergencies effectively and maintain communication with [EMPLOYER'S NAME] during international travel.

**INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

Company-provided insurance

Employees traveling internationally on company business may be covered under [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s group insurance policies for activities conducted within the scope of their employment. Coverage includes:

* [SUMMARY OF COVERAGE].

Exclusions

[EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s insurance does not cover:

* [SUMMARY OF WHAT INSURANCE DOES NOT COVER].

Personal insurance considerations

Employees should review their personal insurance policies to ensure adequate coverage for international travel. Additional insurance policies to consider include:

* [EXAMPLES OF ADDITIONAL POLICIES, e.g., travel medical insurance, evacuation insurance, or baggage loss coverage].

Further assistance

For more information regarding [EMPLOYER'S NAME]'s insurance related to international travel, employees should contact [the [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department/[POSITION]].

**REPORTING ILLNESSES AND INJURIES**

Employees are required to promptly report any injuries, accidents, or illnesses that occur while traveling on [EMPLOYER'S NAME] business, regardless of severity. Reports should be made to [EMPLOYER'S NAME]’s [DEPARTMENT NAME] Department as soon as practicable.

**DISCLAIMER OF RESTRICTIONS ON EMPLOYEES’ RIGHTS**

This policy is not intended to preclude or dissuade employees from engaging in legally protected activities under state or federal law[, including the National Labor Relations Act]. Such activities may include:

* Discussing wages, benefits, or terms and conditions of employment.
* Forming, joining, or supporting labor unions.
* Bargaining collectively through representatives of their choosing.
* Raising concerns or complaints about working conditions for mutual aid or protection.
* Participating in legally required activities.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT AND REVIEW**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (employee name), acknowledge that on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (date), I received and reviewed a copy of [EMPLOYER'S NAME]’s [NAME OF POLICY]. I understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with the policy and adhere to its terms.

I also acknowledge that this policy is not intended to create an employment contract or alter my at-will employment status, unless otherwise specified in a written agreement signed by an authorized representative of [EMPLOYER'S NAME]. Any delay or failure by [EMPLOYER'S NAME] to enforce the provisions of this policy does not constitute a waiver of its rights to enforce them in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date