



Corporate Travel Policy Essentials

A written travel policy is the foundation of any managed travel program. To help you get started on crafting your own, here are some standard topics to cover.



TRAVEL REQUESTS/PRE-TRIP APPROVALS

Having employees submit travel requests that need to be approved by their leaders prior to booking can help curtail unnecessary business trips. Be sure to outline which details travelers need to include when making trip requests, such as the destination, dates of travel, purpose of the trip, and estimated costs.



BOOKING

Provide guidelines on how trips should be booked, including whether it must be done via the travel management company's booking tool and how far in advance flights and hotels must be reserved.



PREFERRED SUPPLIERS

In the policy, employees should not only be prompted to book with preferred air, hotel, and car suppliers but also be informed of the reason you are nudging them to book with certain suppliers—that it all has to do with the discounts you've negotiated.



AIR

In addition to encouraging booking with preferred carrier(s), spell out specific purchasing guidelines, such as when it's OK to select business class over economy or fly nonstop. Also break down which amenities that are not reflected in the original ticket price, such as checked luggage, meals, and in-flight entertainment, will and won't be covered by the organization.



LODGING

In addition to promoting your preferred hotels and/or rate caps per city, you also may specify which incidental expenses, such as in-room Wi-Fi, room service, and valet parking, are reimbursable.



GROUND TRANSPORTATION

There should be guidelines in place when taxis can be used as opposed to more economical modes of transportation (airport shuttles, subways, buses, etc.). If offering rail as an option, spell out when employees may book business class vs. coach and express vs. regional.

For rental cars, denote the class of vehicle employees can procure and how other costs, like fuel, tolls, parking, and auto insurance, will be covered.



PER DIEM

You'll need to inform employees what their daily allowance for meals, gratuities, and incidental expenses is. You also might explain your policy on alcohol and their **duty of loyalty obligations**.



PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT

The policy should provide instruction on how travel costs are to be paid—whether through a centralized corporate account, the employee's own personal credit card, or a mix of both—as well as the process for submitting expenses for reimbursement.



TRAVEL RISK MANAGEMENT

Last but certainly not least, the travel policy should outline what the company is doing to keep travelers safe while on the road and its standard operating procedures when a crisis unfolds.

Here, you also might touch upon travelers' own responsibilities to keep themselves safe, like booking through the company's booking tool so itinerary details are captured and ensure all their contact information is up-to-date in their profiles.