



Mission Related Expense Errors

This paper is intended to assist travelers and Certifying Officers understand the differences between authorized travel expenses and erroneously reimbursed mission related expenses that have been identified by the DoD Travel Policy Compliance Tool. For more information about the Travel Policy Compliance Program or the Personal & Mission Related error query, visit the [Defense Travel Management Office website](#).

I. Mission Related Expenses

In accordance with the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), mission related expenses cannot be reimbursed on a travel voucher. Reimbursing these types of expenses on a travel voucher is a direct violation of the JTR, a potential violation of appropriation law, and conflicts with the requirements of audit readiness. The authority for reimbursing service members and civilians for personal and mission related expenditures is found in the [Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation](#), Volume 10 and how to reimburse them is in the "[Department of Defense \(DoD\) Guidebook for Miscellaneous Expenses](#)." Organizational or local level guidance does not supersede these governing authorities and Certifying Officers may be held pecuniarily liable for any erroneously approved expense.

Instructions for Correction

- Improper Payments for mission related expenses paid on a travel voucher (including on a local travel voucher) must be collected back from the traveler by the Command establishing a debt. If the expense is a valid mission-related expense, the traveler may be reimbursed in accordance with Service/Agency procedures and the [Department of Defense \(DoD\) Guidebook for Miscellaneous Expenses](#).
- Compliance Tool Administrators must consult Service/Agency regulations for authorizing cost transfers via the Standard Form 1081 method.

II. Examples

Mission-Related Expenses Often Incorrectly Reimbursed

Examples of common mission related expenses that are often reimbursed improperly on a travel voucher include, but are not limited to:

- **School Tuition/Course Fees**
 - School tuition or registration fees for training courses are not authorized to be reimbursed on a travel voucher.
 - In accordance with JTR Chapter 2, Part M, conference registration fees associated with conference attendance may be paid on a travel voucher. The authorization must identify the Trip Purpose as travel to attend a conference and attendance must be reported in accordance with the Deputy Secretary of Defense's DoD Conference Guidance, Sept 23, 2015.

- **Witness Fees**
 - Witness fees and expert witness fees are not authorized to be paid on a travel voucher.
- **Printing Costs**
 - Printing of official business-related documents is not authorized to be reimbursed on a travel voucher.
 - Typically these expenses are reimbursed on a DD Form- 1034.
- **Supplies (e.g., Batteries, Tools, Parts, Administrative Supplies, School Supplies)**
 - Purchased supplies are not authorized to be reimbursed on a travel voucher.
 - Typically these expenses are reimbursed via a DD Form- 1034.
- **Postage/Shipping Costs for Personal Clothing, Uniforms, Military/Professional Gear, and Government/Personal Property**
 - Shipping (through the US Postal Service, FedEx, or UPS for example) and other postage expenses for transporting personal clothing, comfort items, uniforms, books, papers, or military/professional gear are not excess baggage and therefore are not authorized to be reimbursed on a travel voucher. Excess baggage that accompanies a traveler on a transportation carrier (such as an airplane) that is in excess of the weight, size, or number of pieces allowable by the carrier is not the same as *Unaccompanied Baggage*.

Travel-Related Expenses Often Identified as Mission Related Expenses

- **Military Working Dog Expenses**
 - JTR Chapter 2, Part M authorizes some travel-related Military Working Dog (MWD) expenses.
 - Transportation of Military Working Dogs must not be claimed as “excess baggage” expenses. These expenses should be claimed as “MWD airfare fees.”
 - Hotel or rental car fees associated with traveling with a MWD must NOT be claimed as “Pet Fees.” These expenses should be claimed as “MWD hotel fees” or “MWD rental car fees.”
 - Food, water, or equipment purchased for Military Working Dogs are mission-related expenses and are not authorized to be reimbursed on a travel voucher. Refer to Service regulations for policies associated with reimbursement of these expenses.
- **Postage Shipping Costs of Unaccompanied Baggage (UB)**
 - Defined in accordance with JTR, Appendix A1:
 - **Service members:** Unaccompanied Baggage for an extended TDY is part of House Hold Goods (HHG) and is limited to “necessary personal clothing and effects for the individual and equipment directly related to the assignment.”
 - **Civilian employees:** Unaccompanied Baggage may be authorized when the TDY is 31 days or longer, the shipment is justified, and the total weight is 350 pounds or less.

UB is not part of HHG allowances and it is defined as “personal effects needed by the traveler.”

- The authority to ship UB is different for service members and civilian employees.
 - **Service members:** Per JTR, par. 3110, UB may be transported by expedited means if authorized in Service regulations. The actual cost for “small package service” shipments (through the US Postal Service, FedEx, or UPS for example) is reimbursable, not to exceed the Transportation Officer’s constructed cost. Shipping or transporting UB (personal property) cannot be reimbursed on a DTS travel voucher unless the service regulations are met, the Transportation Officer’s constructed cost is attached, and the amount claimed is limited to the amount on the constructed cost.
 - **Civilian employees:** Per JTR, par. 4580, UB must be authorized in the authorization, must be IAW Service Regulations, and must not exceed 350 lbs.
- If these criteria are not met, shipping or transporting UB is considered a personal expense and the voucher must be amended to establish a debt.