
2355 - TRAVEL AND ENTERTAINMENT POLICY - RAIL TRAVEL

Resp. Office: Purchasing Services
Approval: Executive Director, Purchasing Services
Effective: April 1, 2015
Last Revision: April, 2015
Last Review: April, 2018

PURPOSE

To provide travel guidelines with regard to the procurement of rail tickets for when traveling on behalf of the University.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the procurement of rail travel by and for all faculty, staff, students and postdocs, traveling on behalf of the University and seeking reimbursement for related expenses from the University regardless of the funding source.

FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENT, POSTDOC RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of Penn travelers to book the lowest rail fare consistent with their itinerary and the business purpose of their trip. Travelers should strive to be as flexible as possible and to make their travel plans as early as possible, thus taking advantage of lower fares.

Full responsibilities of the employee, student or postdoc can be found in Policy #2352.

APPROVER RESPONSIBILITY

Approvers perform a critical control function for the University. Collectively, approvers ensure that expense reports processed for payment are complete, appropriately funded, compliant with policy and are associated with activities that have a valid and necessary business purpose. Designated approvers should assist the employee or student as necessary with understanding applicable policies and compliance requirements.

The approver is also responsible for monitoring ticket usage and for ensuring that travelers are not reimbursed for Amtrak or rail tickets charged to purchasing cards.

Full responsibilities of approvers can be found in Policy #2352.

POLICY

The mode of rail travel is expected to be the least costly option consistent with the itinerary and particular University business involved.

1. Reserved trains on the Northeast Corridor are permitted and should be used for most Amtrak trips. "Coach Class" and "Business Class" (reserved seating) are permitted on these trains.
2. Acela trains are the high-speed trains. Appropriate use of Acela service between Philadelphia, New York and Washington, D.C., is the responsibility of each department, and these trains should be used only when time is of the essence. Business Class seats on Acela trains are the acceptable class of service.
3. Use of First Class service on Amtrak trains is not permitted. Any exception to this policy requires supplemental approval by the head of the School or Center (or a designated representative).
4. If necessary, roomette accommodations may be used for overnight travel, although airline travel is usually faster and less expensive and should be used whenever possible.