COVID-19 Travel Reimbursement FAQs

As part of UHF’s response to COVID-19, travel FAQs are provided below. The University is monitoring the situation closely and you are encouraged to check the University of Hawaii sites regularly in order to keep up to date with the latest advice.

- https://www.hawaii.edu/ohr/covid-19-info
- https://www.hawaii.edu/emergency/important-health-information-novel-coronavirus/

Travel Using UH Foundation Funds

If you requested or planned to request travel related payments from The University of Hawaii Foundation, please consider the following.

If you have not yet been reimbursed and your travel plans were cancelled:

- Attempt to obtain a refund. (see what to do with a refund below)
- If a refund is not possible, submit a completed check request form with appropriate signatures and applicable documentation to the UH Foundation and include a statement such as the following, “travel had to be cancelled and a refund is not possible.”
- If a refund is not possible but the vendor offers a credit, and the credit will be used for legitimate business purposes, submit a completed check request form with appropriate signatures and applicable documentation to the UH Foundation and include a statement such as the following, “travel had to be cancelled, a refund is not possible but a credit was issued and will be used for legitimate business purposes and in accordance with the account purpose.”

If a travel payment has already been processed by UHF and the travel was cancelled:

- Please attempt to obtain a refund. (see what to do with a refund below)
- If the payment is non-refundable, no action should be taken. These payments were made in good faith associated with a legitimate business purpose.
- If a refund is not possible but the vendor offers a credit, the credit must be used for legitimate business purposes.

If your travel plans have been approved by the appropriate UH Officer:

- Submit a completed check request form with appropriate signatures and applicable documentation to the UH Foundation and include documentation of the approval.
What should be done with a refund for cancelled travel plans?

- If the expense was paid for by the University of Hawaii Foundation or reimbursed to you by the UH Foundation then the funds should be deposited back to the UHF account where the expense was charged. If the money was deposited into your account or is in the form of a check with your name, you will need to write a check payable to “The University of Hawaii Foundation” and give it to your departmental finance staff for deposit to the Foundation. If you receive reimbursement from the Foundation for a cancelled airline flight, but also receive a flight voucher for future travel, it is the responsibility of both the traveler and the department head to ensure that the credit will be used for travel with the same business purpose within the time period designated by the airline. Bear in mind that Foundation funds may be restricted by donors for specific purposes.

What if we have travel expenses that are non-refundable due to cancelled travel plans?

- These types of expenses will be eligible for reimbursement. The department should submit a check request with a valid business reason and receipt to Accounts Payable for processing.

What are the fees associated with cancelling a flight?

- There are generally no fees for cancelling a flight. The fees are incurred when rebooking the flight. Many tickets are non-refundable; however, the flight can be cancelled and usually the ticket voucher is available for use one year from the date of issue. In addition, there are airline-imposed change fees for re-booking non-refundable, cancelled tickets. The fee is usually $200 for domestic flights and $300 for international flights, plus any difference in fare, but can vary depending on the airline. During extraordinary circumstances airlines may waive the re-booking fee.

When should I cancel my flight?

- Given the current situation, we recommend you wait until the last minute to cancel your flights in case the airlines issue waivers. If the ticket is cancelled prior to the airline issuing the waiver, the ticket will not be eligible for the waiver. You can cancel up until the day of travel as long as you have not checked in. We recommend checking the airlines’ websites for cancellation policies. If you have booked with a travel agency you can get this information from them.

If you have any questions specific to travel reimbursements from the UH Foundation:

Contact Leeann Tollefsen by email at leeann.tollefsen@uhfoundation.org or by phone at 376-7862.