

NAU TRAVEL: COST COMPARISONS – How-To Run

POLICY EXPECTATIONS

The following travel arrangements will require a cost comparison if deviating from university policy.

Please reference the [full associated travel policy for cost comparison requirements](#), the below is only a quick reference.

Lodging Rates over Allowable Rate Schedule, SAAM or DoD: Policy ref. [TRV535 sec. B-3](#).

If a traveler is requesting lodging accommodations above the State of Arizona Accounting Manual (SAAM) and/or Department of Defense (DoD) allowable rate, a [Policy and Compliance Review \(PCR\)](#) is required from the Comptroller's Office prior to booking **and** *cost comparisons must accompany the request.*

Personal Vehicle use Out-of-State: Policy ref. [TRV525 sec. E-6b](#).

If a traveler is taking a personal vehicle out-of-state for their convenience, the university will only reimburse the lesser of actual miles driven or the cost of a round trip flight from a common carrier airlines. Cost comparisons are required.

Combining Business and Personal Travel: Policy ref. [TRV525 sec. H-2](#).

If a traveler combines personal and business time and seeks reimbursement for transportation expenses, specifically airfare to and from the business destination, cost comparisons that fit the business need are required.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS & RESOURCES

"More Cost Effective" - You must *show*, not merely tell, that travel arrangements are more cost effective; this can include completing cost comparison calculations *or* running cost comparisons using a travel search engine. Below are examples and things to note when creating your **cost comparison support documentation**.

Resources:

- Travel Search Engines – Kayak, Travelocity, Hotels.com, etc.
- Vehicle Expense Rate Calculators – [Fleet Services](#) & [Comptroller's Office](#) websites

What to Run/Capture: *see the 2nd & 3rd page for examples*

- Show **date, time and destination(s)** for the **business need** of the trip.
- Show the **vendors and/or different arrangements** you are comparing.
 - Include things such as round-trip v. 1-way flights, ticket class, type of room, location or proximity to traveler's business or event, etc.
- Show the **date & time** comparisons were run. This can be done by using the snip tool and capturing the full browser page and date/time in the lower left of your computer screen – *see example on pages 2 & 3*.
- Be sure to indicate on the cost comparison *which* option was selected - flight, lodging establishment, etc.
- If you *don't* choose the most cost-effective option, detail in writing why – highlight specific business needs or other issues with the listed comparisons; what is the WHY?
e.g. closest lodging had bad reviews, some service(s) not being provided (free parking and/or breakfast, etc.), too many layovers, arrival/departure times don't fit your business need, etc.

NOTE! We cannot proceed with a traveler's reimbursement until the above documentation has been received!

COMPARISON TIMELINES

REQUIRED: Run a minimum of (2) weeks prior to departure **OR** when the rest of the travel arrangements are being reserved/booked, whichever occurs first.

Comparisons run day of departure or post-travel are not acceptable/usable for audit purposes and will not be included with the Expense Claim.

CONTACTS & RESOURCES

For additional assistance please contact your department's assigned Travel Specialist/Coordinator, or one of the below Travel Assistant Managers.

Reimbursement Processing Support Unit - NAU-Travel@nau.edu

Academic Department Travel Assistant Manager: Melinda.Miller@nau.edu, 928-523-3250

Administrative Department Travel Assistant Manager: Nicholas.Sanchez@nau.edu, 928-523-9422

The screenshot displays a Kayak flight search interface. At the top, the search parameters are: Round-trip, 1 adult, Economy, 0 bags, Phoenix (PHX) to Los Angeles (LAX), Tue 12/6 to Tue 12/13. The search results are sorted by 'Best' with a price of \$138 and a duration of 1h 25m. The results include an American Airlines advertisement for \$138 nonstop, two American Airlines flight options (8:20 am - 8:48 am and 7:58 pm - 10:20 pm), and a 'Flight + train' option for \$99. The 'Flight + train' option involves a 1-stop flight from PHX to LAX via SNA, followed by a train from LAX to PHX. The page also features a 'Recommended filters' section on the left and a 'Fee Assistant' section at the bottom left.

CAPTURE - AIRFARE:

- Search engine used
- Type of flight: round-trip v. 1-way
- How many passengers?
- Type of Ticket: Economy, main cabin
- Departure & Destination: City, State or City, Country
- Flight Dates
- Vendor and Flight Information – do these flights meet the business need?
- How much do they cost?
- When were the comparisons run – date and time?

West Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA

hotels.com/Hotel-Search?adults=2&d1=2022-12-06&d2=2022-12-13

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Hotels.com More travel English List your property Support Trips Sign in

Going to Los Angeles, California, United States

Check-in Dec 6

Check-out Dec 13

Travelers 1 room, 2 travelers

Search

Sort by star rating \$150 to \$210 Hotel West Los Angeles Remove all filters

557 properties

What we are paid impacts our sort order

Sort by Star rating

Unlock instant savings You could get an extra 10% off with Member Prices. Join now, it's free Sign in

Search by property name e.g. Marriott

Filter by

Popular filters

- Universal Studios Hollywood
- Ocean view
- Kitchen
- Washer and dryer
- Condominium resort

Price per night \$150 \$210

Guest rating

- Any
- Wonderful 9+
- Very good 8+

Hotel Indigo Los Angeles Downtown, an IHG Hotel

★★★★☆

10.38 mi from West Los Angeles

Pool

Collect stamps

8.2/10 Very Good (1,046 reviews)

\$199
\$1,760 total

citizenM Los Angeles Downtown

★★★★

11.31 mi from West Los Angeles

Collect stamps

9.0/10 Wonderful (531 reviews)

15% off

~~\$179~~ **\$152**
\$1,238 total

Ayres Hotel Manhattan Beach LAX

★★★★

10.61 mi from West Los Angeles

Pool Hot tub

Fully refundable Reserve now, pay later

Collect stamps

9.2/10 Wonderful (1,002 reviews)

20% off

~~\$210~~ **\$168**
\$1,322 total

11:35 AM 11/6/2022

CAPTURE - LODGING:

- Search engine used
- Destination: City, State or City, Country
- Vendor(s)/Property full name
- Check-in and Check-out dates AND number of rooms/travelers in each room
- What is the nightly rate?
- When were the comparisons run – date and time?