

## Kele McGarey

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**From:** Kele McGarey  
**Sent:** Monday, March 9, 2020 5:09 PM  
**To:** infolist@u.washington.edu  
**Subject:** COVID-19 Travel Reimbursement Guidelines Update

Hi Travel Experts!

We would like to communicate that our initial reimbursement guidelines are not based on a new initiative or change in policy, but as guidance to our current policy and how it can be applied to trip cancellations/changes due to COVID-19 (coronavirus). This guidance pertains to all travel, domestic and foreign. The policy guidance will be provided again below under **Change/Cancellation of Travel Plans Policy**. Note that this policy is for all **FUNDING TYPES – unless otherwise specified**. For a summary of the application of UW Travel policies for Sponsored Award travel please see the Post Award Fiscal Compliance webpage: [https://finance.uw.edu/pafc/Travel\\_COVID-19](https://finance.uw.edu/pafc/Travel_COVID-19)

**Refunds/credits/vouchers/etc.:** traveler must attempt to receive any refunds they can and return funds back to department. Any credits/vouchers must also be surrendered to the department or be used for future business. \*\*Note that if a replacement fare cannot be used for future UW business or surrendered to the department, this does not allow it to be used for personal reasons. This would be a very high audit risk as it would link University funding to a personal vacation.

**STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS:** Please note that travel expenses (e.g. visas, flights) incurred by students studying abroad, in general, are not reimbursable. For questions about restrictions on UW student travel outside the U.S., please consult: <https://www.washington.edu/studyabroad/coronavirus/> - please direct any questions to – [studyabroad@uw.edu](mailto:studyabroad@uw.edu) – 206.221.4404

Due to the global and domestic impact, there has been a surge in changes to travel plans. Normally fully refundable/changeable fares are avoided due to high costs, but departments may want to consider these if there is a high chance of cancellation/change. Keep in mind that we have fully refundable airfare options through the Alaska state contract, more information can be found here: <https://finance.uw.edu/travel/airfare#statecontractfares>

Another thing to consider is the use of a contracted UW travel agency, these companies are well equipped to handle these type of situations. More information can be found on our [how to book & pay](#) for travel page.

### **Change/Cancellation of Travel Plans Policy**

Change/cancellation of travel plans is reimbursable when due to:

- UW business
- Cancelled conference/meeting
- Airline cancelled flight (replacement fare must be used for future UW business trip or surrendered to the department)
- Unexpected death of a family member
- Traveler's own unexpected illness which kept them from taking the business trip or continuing the trip as planned and is not due to the traveler's own misconduct/negligence.
- The department has made the determination that if the travel were to take place, the health and safety of the traveler would be at risk (refer to [department](#) section in policy accountability).

**Note:** *federal awards* restrict airfare purchases to refundable tickets and thus, unused non-refundable airfare may not be charged to a federal award in any circumstances. See the [PAFC](#) webpage for more information.

<https://finance.uw.edu/travel/ChangeCancellationTravel>

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Stay healthy and safe!

Travel Services

[travel@uw.edu](mailto:travel@uw.edu)

206.543.5858