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Foreign Travel May No Longer Exceed 2:1 Business-to-Personal-Days Ratio

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from SLAC Controller Office

The Department of Energy recently established new foreign travel rules requiring SLAC to change its personal travel procedure. Effective immediately, for foreign travel that ends after July 31, 2012, personal leave in conjunction with SLAC and work for others (WFO) foreign travel may not exceed a two business days to one personal day ratio (2:1). Travel days to and from a business location will be considered business days.

For example, an employee taking a foreign business trip of four days can take up to two personal days on the same trip. And an employee taking a foreign business trip of six days can take up to three personal days on the same trip. Both scenarios abide by the new 2:1 business to personal days ratio.

Please note that the 2:1 ratio does not apply to domestic travel, unless the domestic travel is in conjunction with a foreign trip.

Additional travel procedure changes may occur once the DOE order outlining these changes is added to the SLAC contract during negotiations later this year. More information will be provided at that time.

Please read the frequently asked questions and scenarios below for more information. If you have additional questions, contact the [Travel Reimbursement Office](#) (1).

Frequently Asked Questions and Scenarios:

Q: Will weekends and holidays be counted as business days or personal days?

A: Weekends, holidays and other necessary standby days may be counted as business days only if they fall between business travel days. If non-business days are at the beginning or end of a traveler's business activity, and the traveler arrives early or remains at the business destination for non-business reasons more than 24 hours before or after

the business activity, those days will be counted as personal days.

Q: My trip has a total of nine business days, which is an odd number. Half of nine days is four and a half. Can I round that up to take five personal days and still be in compliance with the 2:1 ratio?

A: No. If your trip has an odd number of business days, it should be rounded down to the nearest even number of days before you determine the allowable number of personal days. In this case, nine business days should be counted as eight days, so only four personal days are allowed.

Q: Say I am on a DOE/state-approved foreign business trip of four days with two personal days, but I decide to extend my trip by two additional personal days, exceeding the 2:1 ratio. Will my expenses be reimbursable?

A: No. Business and personal travel expenses will NOT be reimbursed for any foreign trip if the number of personal days exceeds the 2:1 business to personal days ratio.

Q: I paid for an upcoming, 21-day personal vacation in Germany. Today, my department asked if I'm willing to attend an important two-day business meeting while I'm there. My department is willing to pay for the lodging, meals for the business days and airfare fees to change my return date. Will this be allowable since I will have 21 personal days and only two business days?

A: If SLAC interrupts your paid, personal travel plans, the business days and related airfare change expenses are allowable; this is an acceptable exception to the 2:1 rule. Before the business trip, a foreign travel authorization form must be submitted to the SLAC Travel Office for DOE pre-approval and U.S. State Department country clearance through the Foreign Travel Management System. Please note that SLAC will not reimburse for your original personal airfare, and you will be asked to provide relevant supporting documents for audit purposes (e.g. pre-purchased airfare itinerary, etc.).

Q: Can exceptions be made? What if there are extenuating circumstances?

A: Exceptions require Associate Lab Director approval to contact DOE for approval. If DOE approves, travel expenses but not airfare will be reimbursed for business days.

SLAC Finance & Administration



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