

MSU Travel Office 2017 FADP Questions & Answers

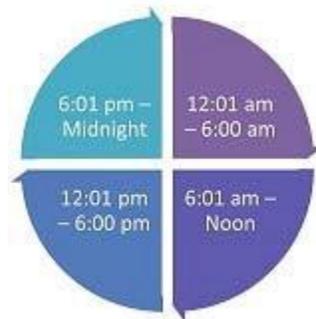
Q1: Consistency of application of the guidance and rules regarding meal and incidental per diems on the first day of travel and the last day of travel.

A: For domestic travel within the Continental United States (CONUS), MSU uses the [CONUS rates](#) for meal and incidental (M&IE) reimbursement to university business travelers. MSU business travelers are reimbursed for meals incurred while in travel status according to where they will be lodged upon arrival at their destination and where they were last lodged when they departed to return to MSU on day of return. If meals are provided, as with all travel days, they may not be reimbursed and are subtracted from the M&IE rate for that locale. Airline meals are not considered "provided meals".

For international travel and travel outside the Continental United States (OCONUS), MSU applies the quarter day method for determining meals and incidentals on days of departure and return. International M&IE also known as [foreign per diem rates](#) are maintained by the U.S. Department of State; M&IE rates applicable to locations [outside the Continental United States](#) (OCONUS) are maintained by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Lodging location determines the applicable M&IE rate for days of departure and return. For each quarter day (or fraction thereof) that an MSU business traveler is in travel status, one fourth of the applicable M&IE rate is allowable.

On day of departure and day of return, OCONUS and International M&IE are calculated on the basis of the number of quarters the traveler is in travel status. A day is divided into 4 quarters: 12:01 a.m. to 6:00 a.m., 6:01 a.m. to noon, 12:01 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and 6:01 p.m. to midnight.



Example: A traveler leaves MSU at 2 PM to begin travel to Honolulu, Hawaii. Because 2 PM is in the 3rd quarter of the day (12:01 – 6 PM), the traveler is in travel status for 2 quarters or ½ of the day and eligible for 50% M&IE at the Honolulu rate for the day of departure.

When returning, the traveler receives M&IE for the quarters of the return date he/she is in travel status. For example, when the traveler awakens on their last day of travel, he/she is in travel status. Travel status ends when the traveler arrives back at MSU.

MSU Travel Office 2017 FADP Questions & Answers

Example: A traveler departs Mexico City at 7 AM CT and arrives back at MSU at 5 PM. Counting the quarters of the day the traveler is in travel status (12:01 AM to 5 PM) means that the traveler was in travel status for 3 quarters of the day; therefore, entitled to 75% of the M&IE for Mexico City.

Q2: Please address situations with international travel when travelers are going across many time zones. The employee will leave on a certain day (i.e., the 23rd), skip a few time zones during travel and arrive a couple of days (by the calendar, i.e., the 25th) and how we handle the per diems and hotels (if any) during this day and hours that are skipped. This impacts the dates that are shown on the travel itinerary, but the number of hours actually travelled is significantly different than the dates would indicate.

A: Time zones are not taken into consideration when calculating M&IE on days of departure and return.

Example: Traveling to Beijing, China, traveler departs Wednesday at 9 AM from MSU to begin MSU business travel. Traveler is in travel status for 2 days, arriving Friday night (Beijing local time). Because 9 AM is in the second quarter of the day, the traveler is in travel status for 3 quarters of the day (9 AM – 12 AM). Therefore, traveler is eligible for 75% M&IE for day of departure at Beijing rate. (Note: stopping in airports in route to destination are not considered.) While in transit (after day of departure) to Beijing, the traveler is eligible for full M&IE unless otherwise provided.

The screenshot shows a flight itinerary with two segments. The first segment is a flight from Detroit, MI (DTW) to Seattle, WA (SEA) on Wednesday, March 01, 2017, at 12:15pm. The second segment is a flight from Seattle, WA (SEA) to Beijing/Peking, China (PEK) on Thursday, March 02, 2017, at 7:55pm. A callout box on the right side of the screenshot provides M&IE calculations for the trip.

DEPARTS Wed Mar 01 2017 | 12:15pm
from Detroit, MI (DTW)

ARRIVES Wed Mar 01 2017 | 2:21pm
at Seattle, WA (SEA)

FLIGHT DL 2655 | 5h 6m

PLANE Boeing 737-900ER - View Seats

1h 38m Layover in Seattle, WA | You

DEPARTS Wed Mar 01 2017 | 3:59pm
from Seattle, WA (SEA)

ARRIVES Next day Thu Mar 02 2017 | 7:55pm
at Beijing/Peking, China (PEK)

FLIGHT DL 129 | 11h 56m

PLANE Boeing 767-300 - View Seats

M&IE Calculations:

- Day of Departure: 50% M&IE Beijing
- Day 2 (in plane): 100%
- Day 3 (arrives in Beijing): 100%

MSU Travel Office 2017 FADP Questions & Answers

On the day of return, the traveler arrives back at MSU on the same day he departed. Therefore, the amount of M&IE allotted is limited despite the number of hours in travel status.

DEPARTS Thu, 23 Mar | 5:45 PM from Beijing Capital Int. (PEK)
ARRIVES Thu, 23 Mar | 7:10 PM at Detroit Metro Arpt (DTW) ←
FLIGHT DL 188 | 13h 25m |   
AIRCRAFT Airbus A330-200 | [View Seats](#) | [Meal Services](#)

M&IE Calculations:

Day of Return: 100% M&IE Beijing

Q3: Please discuss the City the per diem is applicable to when the traveler is in route.

A: As noted in Q2, the airports in flight routing are not taken into consideration when there is no overnight stay.

If a traveler is on a trip with multiple stops, the traveler is reimbursed according to where he/she is lodged that evening. For example, a traveler flies to Dallas for 2 days, travels to Las Vegas for 3 days, and flies to St Louis for a day before returning to MSU. Plotting out the days of travel and locations is the best way to determine applicable M&IE per day.

Day of Departure	Dallas	Meals Incurred
Day 1	Dallas	M&IE
Day 2	Dallas	M&IE
Day 3	Las Vegas	M&IE
Day 4	Las Vegas	M&IE
Day 5	St Louis	M&IE
Day of Return	St Louis	Meals Incurred

MSU Travel Office 2017 FADP Questions & Answers

Q4: Please discuss maximum lodging per diems allowed per city and ensuring that we are below this amount and justifying when they are not.

A: Lodging within the Continental U.S. is reimbursed at the amount actually paid (best available rate).

Maximum lodging allowances apply to [OCONUS](#) and [International](#) travel. The rates, which include taxes and service fees associated with lodging, are published with M&IE by location. If a traveler selects a hotel that is above the maximum lodging rate, they must have a business reason, such as conference hotel, or safety consideration. At this time, approval by the travelers' college or MAU is required in order to be reimbursed lodging expenses above the maximum lodging allowance.

Q5: Clarification on the lodging location and the time of day when it is applicable (i.e., 11:59pm could be 11/25/2016, but 12:01am would technically be 11/26/2016), so which day is the per diem for meals and lodging allowed? This comes into play when individuals may have 4-5 stops on the same trip to different cities/countries.

A: If a university business traveler is lodged in multiple locations while in travel status, the traveler is reimbursed M&IE according to where he/she is lodged at midnight. For example, a traveler may wake up in Chicago but spend that night in Milwaukee. The M&IE rate for that day of travel is at the per diem rate for Milwaukee.

Stop-over airports are not considered when calculating meal per diem. Typically, there is no lodging and the M&IE rate is based upon where the traveler will lodge at his/her destination.

According to the Federal Travel Regulations, rest periods not to exceed 24 hours may be authorized when: scheduled flight time should exceed 14 hours, travel should be coach-class service, by a direct or usually traveled route, and origin or destination point is outside the Continental United States.

The University's expectation is that travelers should have pre-approval for their rest-period.

If a traveler has a rest period in route, the M&IE rate is based upon where they lodged for the rest period. For example, traveler is in route from Lansing to Kilimanjaro and has a rest period in Johannesburg; their lodging allowance and M&IE for that day would be based upon Johannesburg because they were lodged there. However, if a traveler

MSU Travel Office 2017 FADP Questions & Answers

changed planes in Johannesburg and was not lodged, they would be reimbursed M&IE based upon where they will be lodged or where they were last lodged.

Q6: In reconciling reimbursement for grant related expenses, if two or more grants are impacted or two or more individuals are impacted, a control that would allow us to check whether the same expenses were already charged to a different grant that our group would not see.

A: Great point! Unfortunately, our current system relies on preparers to reference documents in the MSU Financial System. Certainly checking financial statements often is important as well.

Q7: Is it an MSU requirement that all MSU travelers fill out a travel profile, even if they make their own travel arrangements outside Conlin?

A: At this time, MSU travelers are required to complete a travel profile in order to book through the University's preferred travel agencies (Conlin) and online via Concur. The profile offers travelers the opportunity to register for electronic receipts, provide frequent traveler information, and travel preferences. By using the MSU Travel Program, university employees have access to airline, hotel, and car rental discounts available only through Conlin Travel and Concur. As part of their service, Conlin Travel provides travel reservation updates, tracks unused airline tickets, and advocates for our travelers when issues arise. Having a travel profile and using the Travel Program afford travelers access to the mobile travel apps allowing travelers access to the Concur Travel App, Trip It and Trip It Pro, Curb, and Trip Lingo.

Q8: Travel Arrangers expressed concerns that there is a "required" field in the International Traveler's database for "best alternative contact". Could this change be made to the Pre-Trip Authorization form to include that verbiage?

A: The MSU Travel Office is working to enhance the Pre-Trip Authorization so that it is in step with the MSU Travelers Abroad Database.