

Expense Module Improvements

A robust collaborative process that engaged faculty and staff from a range of areas was held last Spring to streamline the expense reimbursement process. The Payment Services team and Ignite Support teams have been working hard to streamline the Expense Report process to improve employee experience.

Domestic Per Diem

- Reimbursements for domestic travel are now based on Location. If you traveled to a location that has a higher cost of living as determined by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), your per diem is now calculated at a higher rate. This aligns with other RI institutions.
 - Users need to select locations identified by 4 segments: City, County, State, and Country. **Cities spanning multiple counties are coded to the same rate.*
 - This change applies only to the contiguous United States, it does not apply to Alaska or Hawaii.

Auto-Population Turned Off

- In the past, the expense date and location would default based on the last data used in the system, which often caused issues.
- If a project number was used, that project number would re-populate on all future expenses.
- This auto-population feature has been turned off.

Reduced Expense Templates and Expense Types

- The number of Expense Templates has been reduced to only: Travel and Non-Travel.
- The Expense Types have also been reduced from 37 to 20.
 - Refer to the [Expense Template & Type QRG](#) detailing the available Expense Types for each Template along with a Description of Use for each type, and a crosswalk for types no longer in use.
 - A new Expense Type: **Other-Travel** should be used for most expense types that have been removed. Refer to the crosswalk section of the above guide for further details.
 - The Business Meals/Hospitality expense types have been combined into a simplified single expense type.
 - Refer to the [Expense Template & Type FAQ](#) for more information.

Improved Communication

- The language for rejected expense reports has been softened to “Returned” instead of “Rejected.” Details for returning the Expense Report are still available in the Auditor Notes section of the email.

Reduced Required Fields

- A description was required on each expense type entered on an expense report, causing duplicative work.
- Descriptions will no longer be required for most travel expense types.

***URA involvement** ~ *This improvement is being rolled out with the Business Transformation Initiative at the time each area/division is transitioned with a full Business Office in place.*

- Expense Reports charged to a sponsored project will route to the URA to confirm allowability before the expense is posted to the project. We expect this change will help reduce the number of cost transfers required.

The below resources are available if you have additional questions:

- [Individual Meals Per Diem Job Aid](#)
- [Individual Meals Per Diem Video](#)
- [Templates & Types Video](#)

Additional questions on any of the above changes can be forwarded to your Business Officer.