University of Windsor

To: Campus Community Members

From: Rachel McRae, Procurement Manager

Date: April 20, 2020

Re: Employee Travel Advances During COVID-19

In response to the growing concerns regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19), and to address the inquiries we have received regarding reimbursement for cancelled travel expenses, the University Finance department is issuing guidance on reimbursement procedures for costs incurred as a result of cancelling or changing business-related travel due to COVID-19.

These guidelines are in accordance with the **University Travel Policy** which can be found on the Finance website and apply to all faculty and staff. The University recognizes there are many complexities to each travel case, therefore if you have any questions regarding the below guidelines and eligibility to apply for reimbursement, please contact Accounts Payable.

Eligible Reimbursable Expenses

Costs associated with changed or cancelled business-related travel booked prior to the Government of Canada travel advisory are considered reimbursable. Please see the University Travel Policy and/or applicable Grant funding guidelines, for further detail on reimbursable travel expenses.

The University will not provide reimbursement for cancelled travel that was booked after the Government of Canada and/or University indicated that travel to that destination was not permitted, as outlined on the University COVID-19 website.

Cancellation Costs:

Claims for reimbursement of business-related travel cancellation costs should be submitted following the same procedure as if the travel had occurred. Every effort should be made to obtain a full or partial refund from the travel provider (airline, hotel, conference organizer, car rental, etc.). Please provide evidence of attempts for reimbursement when submitting your claim.

Credited Travel Costs:

If your travel was cancelled due and you have been provided with a credit for future travel in lieu of a refund, you will be required to use the credit for business related travel before it expires.

If the travel provider issues you a credit but you do not have any other business-related travel needs within the next 12 months, please request reimbursement of the credited travel, and any additional out of pocket costs, by submitting a expense report within UWinsite Finance. Finance advises the claimant to wait until the credit period expires, before submitting a claim for reimbursement of the unused credit

The reimbursement of any credited travel and/or out of pocket costs, will be charged back to claimant's departmental or project account.

Travel Advances:

Unused travel advances related to travel that has been cancelled or postponed should be settled with the University as soon as possible. If your travel advance applies to travel that would have occurred before the University's fiscal year end (April 30, 2020), the claimant is **must** settle this travel advance before April 30, 2020.

Travel advances for cancelled travel when a refund was received from travel provider:

In order to reimburse the University for any unused travel advances for travel costs that have been reimbursed to you by the travel provider, simply make a cheque payable to: University of Windsor for the same amount as the

travel advance you initially received University. Please mail the cheque to the University of Windsor Accounts Receivable Department (CHT 4th Floor).

In order to ensure that your reimbursement is applied against the correct travel advance expense report, please reference the travel advance expense report number (i.e. ADVEXP- 0034207226) on the memo line of the cheque. Once the cheque is received by the University, Accounts Payable will automatically apply payment against the appropriate travel advance expense report.

To look up the balance outstanding on your travel advance, you can review any previously submitted expense reports in the Expense module in UWinsite Finance. The travel advance expense report number can be found in the top left corner of your travel advance expense report (begins with ADVEXP).

Travel Advances for Cancelled Travel When Credit Was Received from Travel Provider:
If you have received a travel advance from the University for travel that has recently been cancelled and have received a credit from the travel provider, please submit an expense report in UWinsite to clear your outstanding travel advance within the system. This will ensure that the travel advance relating to the cancelled travel properly clears, and that future expense reports for travel reimbursement are not applied against this open advance.

When you submit your travel expense report in UWinsite Finance, the system will automatically match the expense report to the travel advance, thus clearing the travel advance owing to the University. The travel costs in the expense report will be recorded in the operating or project account to which the expense report is charged. It will be the responsibility of the budget approver for the account being charged to follow up with the claimant and ensure that any applicable refunded credits are eventually used for business related travel. This would only be the case if the claimant were to book any additional business-related travel, before the credits expire.

Supporting Documentation for Expense Claims

When completing an Expense claim for any of the reasons identified above, and in accordance with the University Travel Policy, your claim should include the following supporting documentation:

- Proof of original purchase, including the original cost paid and the date the travel was booked
- Proof of efforts made to obtain a full refund from the travel provider
- If travel was cancelled, in lieu of proof of travel (i.e. boarding passes), please include a copy of the cancellation notice from the service provider showing proof of cancellation including the amount of refund or credit issued (if any), and the resulting non-refundable portion
    - It is the responsibility of the Claimant's one-up approver to review the Claimant's supporting documentation against any travel advisories in effect at that time
    - The approver should include a comment within the claim, that they reviewed the travel advisory to ensure that the Claimant's travel dates were within the advisory dates. A master list of UW travel advisories is currently available on the University's COVID-19 website.

Where possible, use the classification code "COV" to indicate that the costs incurred relate to COVID-19.