Top 5 Reasons a Travel Expense Report is ‘Sent Back’

1. **Missing or Incorrect Attachments**

   Please be sure that you include attachments to your expense reports. Every expense report should have at least one attachment that supports the business purpose of the expense claimed.

   There are 5 items we look for when we review a travel expense report:
   - **Business Purpose**: agenda, schedule of events, itinerary
     - Includes dates, location, event name, etc.
   - **Registration**: if there was a registration fee
   - **Transportation**: airfare, vehicle rental, mileage, train, etc.
   - **Lodging**: hotel, note - *stayed with family*, etc.
   - **Meals**: remember to choose your per diem deductions

2. **Missing University Prepaid Items**

   Regardless of payment method, all travel related expenses should be timely reconciled on a travel expense report for a full accounting of the total trip cost. Travelers with pre-paid transactions on a purchasing card (personal card or another person’s card) should record the expense as prepaid expenses on the travel expense report, and include the receipts/documentation for the expense as attachments for the expense.

3. **Incorrect Mileage Rate**

   University of Wisconsin-La Crosse employee travelers are expected to use rental vehicles to travel when vehicle transportation is determined to be the most appropriate mode of transportation. Vehicle transportation is generally the most appropriate for round trips less than 400 miles. The Turndown Rate should be utilized when employee travelers choose to drive their personally owned vehicles (POV) more than 100 miles roundtrip, rather than rent a vehicle to use during their travel. For round trips less than 100 miles, employee travelers may use their personal vehicles and be reimbursed for mileage at the Standard rate.

   - **Standard Rate** - $0.575
   - **Turndown Rate** - $0.352
     - Driving your POV less than 100 miles round trip – Standard Rate
     - Driving your POV more than 100 miles round trip – Turndown Rate
4. **Meals & Incidentals Expense Type – Daily Itemization and Per Diem Deductions**

Individual travelers can use this expense type when they claim meal expenses during overnight travel. This is claimed/paid as a per diem allowance. This M&IE allowance covers individual, out-of-pocket meals and certain, defined incidental expenses.

The M&IE per diem allowance includes all meals (not already provided/paid for by your conference) and incidental expenses defined as:

- Fees & Tips for services staff (wait staff, bell hops, housekeeping, etc.)
- Transportation between lodging and places where meals are taken
- Laundry and dry cleaning
- Bottle water – for international travel needs.

The Meals and Incidentals expense type must be selected for each day of travel, as the per diem is calculated on a per day basis.

The Per Diem Deductions must be selected on the First and Last days of travel. Travelers are eligible for 75% of the total M&IE per diem on the first and last travel days. The first day rate is based on 75% of where you will be spending the night. For the last day of travel, you will receive 75% of the total for the location where you spend the night prior to returning to your headquarters. Additionally, per diem deductions should be used when a traveler has provided meals from the conference. Deductions should be taken from the per diem for these meals – rates are based on the meal type.

5. **Lack of Clarification or Justification of Expense Claims**

Each expense report allows a comments box in the upper right corner for additional information or ‘Expense/travel justification and support details’ to help the approvers and auditors better understand the travel details of the trip. Please use the comments box to provide additional information related to your trip that the approver(s) and/or auditor may question. By providing additional information prior to submitting your report, this could speed up the processing and avoid your report being returned to you to answer additional questions.

Additionally, each expense type typically provides a description box within the ‘Detail’ that also allows for additional information to be provided for that specific expense claim.