

Policy and Procedure: Non-Travel Advances



Non-Travel Advance Policy

A non-travel advance is money that is issued to a university employee for expenses that will be incurred due to University business. The funds are advanced under limited circumstances so that the employee will not have to use personal funds.

Non-travel employee advances can be used for two basic types of transactions:

- x Research subject payment
 - o A research subject fee or participant payment can be obtained if a university employee is conducting research or a program and needs to give a certain fee to each subject or participant at the time of the study or event. Nominal fees should not exceed \$50 per subject or participant. Information that needs to be provided includes the number of participants, the length of the study, the amount for parking, and the number of repeat visits per participant per calendar year.

- x Phonathons or like circumstances where participants receive a nominal fee

Individuals, as a general rule, should not advance their own funds to purchase supplies and services on behalf of the University. Departments/schools should select vendors who accept University Purchase Orders. Purchases should be made through established purchasing policy and procedures and the University should deal directly with vendors to arrange for the receipt of goods and the payment.

In limited instances the department/school or individual may pay for the item and be reimbursed. If it is necessary that an employee advance funds to purchase supplies or services for University business, the immediate supervisor must first authorize the purchase. The employee should request reimbursement by completing an Expense Report in NUFinancials via the NUPortal.

Occasionally, an individual purchases valuable equipment (e.g., personal computer, camera, or personal calendar systems) and seeks reimbursement for the purchase. This practice is inappropriate and the University makes no guarantee that it will authorize reimbursement. Individuals who take such action must understand that such equipment belongs to the University and should be properly recorded.

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Advance Restrictions

- x Advances are only available for university employees. Individuals who are not University employees are not eligible for advances (except for non-employee graduate students as outlined below).
- x Advances are not to be used for purchases that can be processed on a purchase order and paid through Accounts Payable.
- x Advances cannot be used for reimbursement for expenses already incurred.
- x Non-travel advances are not issued for less than \$3 0. Petty cash should be used for items that require \$3 0 or less:
www.northwestern.edu/financial-operations/controller/treasury-operations/depository-services
- x Advances are only given one week prior to project or event.
- x

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personal check made payable to Northwestern University. Expense Report processing is given priority attention to ensure reimbursement is timely.

A non-employee graduate student must reconcile his/her advance by completing and submitting a Visitor[®] Expense Report with documentation of use of the advance funds. Any unspent funds must be returned with the Expense Report in the form of a personal check made payable to Northwestern University. Expense Report processing is given priority attention to ensure reimbursement is timely.

Accounts Payable Advance Reconciliation Procedure

Accounts Payable will review the Expense Report for completeness. If needed,