

To improve the process of reimbursement in a timely manner, STPF has come compiled a list of the top 10 reasons expense reports are disapproved or delayed:

1. **Not including the STPF Approval document**-The expense report will be disapproved if the STPF approval email is not included. Please be sure to attach the correct approval with every reimbursement request. *1st Document on the TER*
2. **Expending any funds BEFORE getting approval from both mentor and STPF. (This includes buying airline tickets via Concur or paying any fees)** Verbal approvals and or email approvals are not considered valid. Please ensure that you submit a request via Fellows Central and receive the approval email stating that STPF has approved the request before expending any funds. If purchases are made before receiving approval, you will be responsible for those costs.
3. **Hotel and M&IE Per Diem**-For domestic travel, please check gsa.gov and for international travel, please visit the State Department site. Per diem is broken out into two parts-lodging rates (does not include taxes and other fees) and meals and incidentals. For meals and incidentals, the per diem is 75% of the rate for the **city to which you are going** for your travel day. For international flights, this only applies for the day you leave US soil and the day you return.
4. **Currency Exchange rate sheets** are needed for any receipts that do not clearly list the US dollar equivalent. Conversion sheets only list approximate amounts on that day, redacted credit card receipts are recommended to get the exact amount if there is a discrepancy.
5. **Airline ticket receipts**-Please include either the receipt from Concur or other airline that clearly lists the dates of travel, the airlines, and the amount of the ticket. Please include boarding passes when available.
6. **Itemized hotel receipts**-must clearly indicate the dates of stay, room rate, taxes, and fees **per day**. A hotel receipt with just a bulk amount will not be accepted.
7. **Lyft/Uber/Taxi**-Are reimbursable for specific event related transportation. To and from the airport and your home or hotel and to and from the hotel and event location. **Transportation to restaurants, city attractions or any other destination NOT associated with the approved request will be disapproved.**
8. **Proof of completion documents**-If you have completed a training, please include some type of document that indicates that you participated in the training event, and that you completed it. Some training courses offer certificates, others do not. If you attend a course that does not culminate in a certificate, please include an email or some document indicating participation and completion.
9. **Comparables**-When requesting personal travel or travel from a city outside of the DC metro area, please provide comparables. There should be two sets of airfare rates, one listing the cost of the airline ticket for the days of the event only and the other including the personal days. If the cost is similar (less than \$100 difference) STPF will approve the cost. If the cost including the travel days is significantly higher >\$100, then you will be responsible for the difference. **If comparables are not included, your request could be denied.**
10. **Business class train tickets**-When using Federal funds, there are rules regarding travel. All travel should be economy class or coach class. Business class is unallowable. If you are purchasing a train ticket, **you must get pre-approval from STPF finance for a business class ticket. These will only be approved in certain circumstances where travel would be significantly impacted.**

