



REQUESTING ADVANCES FROM MCGILL FINANCIAL SERVICES

This summary has been prepared by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies based on information available at <https://www.mcgill.ca/financialservices/travel/procedures>. In case of discrepancy, the Financial Services website prevails.

An Expense Report must be submitted to the Travel Desk to reimburse individuals for incurred travel and other expenses. Since preparing and processing Expense Reports may take some time upon return from travel, graduate students travelling for University-related activities are encouraged to request an advance to cover expenses they have personally paid for in advance of the trip, or expect to incur during the trip. In cases where more than one payment is required in advance of a trip, multiple advance requests (and types of advances) may be requested at different intervals prior to the trip.

There are three types of travel advances:

- **Third-Party Payments:**
 - The requestor can be an employee, student or visitor.
 - Payments are made directly to third party suppliers in advance of the trip, such as payments for conference registrations.
 - Payments may be requested at any time with copy of invoice. Note that not all third parties will issue an invoice for a third-party payment.
 - The invoice must be submitted with the comprehensive Expense Report following the trip (in order to account for the advance).
 - Note that for conferences in Montreal or virtual conferences where no other expenses will be claimed, payment for conference registration may be made by submitting a third party payment Expense Report instead of an advance.

- **Out-of-Pocket in Advance of Trip:**
 - **May be reimbursed to Employees and Students ONLY.**
 - For expenses the Claimant personally paid for in advance of the trip (examples include conference registration or hotel deposit).
 - This type of advance may be requested at any time (and in multiple instances as Claimant prepays), with copy of receipt and proof of payment.
 - Receipt(s) and proof of payment must be submitted with the comprehensive Expense Report following the trip (in order to account for the advance).

- **Cash Advances**
 - **May be issued to Employees and Students ONLY**
 - Payment to the Claimant is to cover cash needs for anticipated expenses to be incurred during the trip.
 - Cash advances are limited to field studies, extended trips, and when trips occur in countries where cash is the only or predominant mode of payment.
 - Cash advances will not be issued more than 30 days in advance of the trip.
 - Amounts equal to or greater than \$5,000 require a breakdown of estimated costs.

Advances for Airfare/Rail Paid by FOAPAL Authorization Form

- Employees and Students who do not want to be out-of-pocket can book airfare and rail by completing [the Airfare/Rail FOAPAL Authorization Form](#) (sign-in is required). This option is only available for travel booked via Direct Travel. The traveler would have to create an account/traveler profile with [Concur](#), select their trip of choice and then place their trip selection on hold. They would then fill in the FOAPAL authorization form and then submit it to the Travel Desk. Once they have received the go-ahead from the Travel Desk, they can finalize their booking in Concur. Note that this FOAPAL payment is considered an advance and will need to be reconciled in the final Expense Report. Make sure to save a copy of your boarding passes for reconciliation.
- As long as the individual has the approval of the Fund Financial Manager (FFM) for their travel-related expense and can provide proof in the form of a quote or invoice, they can claim an advance before travelling and therefore not be left out-of-pocket.
- Upon returning from their trip, the individual would have to reconcile the advance, along with any other expenses they wish to be reimbursed for. The Expense Report should be submitted 30 days following the return date of the trip.

Reconciliation of Advances through Expense Reports

- All advances including travel advances paid to third parties and amounts paid through the FOAPAL Authorization Form for airfare/rail must be cleared by submitting an Expense Report 30 days following the return date of the trip.
- Advances not reconciled 30 days following the return date of the trip are considered overdue.
- Once an advance is considered overdue, no additional advances may be requested, nor will any expense report be reimbursed to the Claimant until the overdue advance is cleared.
- The Fund Financial Manager (FFM) or Principal Investigator (PI) is not impacted by overdue advances of the Claimant. The FFM or PI is still able to obtain his/her personal advances or reimbursements unless an unresolved issue requires escalation.
- In the event that an amount is to be returned to the University, the preferred method of payment is via Interac e-Transfer to traveldeskhelpt@mcgill.ca. Payments via personal cheque must be made payable to McGill University.

Important considerations

- Travel awards from Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS), such as GREAT and [Graduate Mobility Awards](#), do not follow these processes. Under no circumstances an advance should be requested via the forms above for these awards.

Additional resources

- Travel and Other Expenses Policy: <https://www.mcgill.ca/financialservices/policies/reimburse>
- Procedures for Travel and Other Expenses: <https://www.mcgill.ca/financialservices/travel/procedures>
- How To's for Minerva Advances and Expense Reports: <https://www.mcgill.ca/financialservices/travel/howto>
- Submitting a request for an advance: consult the instructions on the next page

Submit a Request for an Advance

- Students can **not** request an Advance for themselves through the Student Menu. An employee will have to use the **Employee/Finance** Menu option in Minerva, **by Submitting an Advance Request for Someone Else**

- **The student is responsible for the following:**
 - Must confirm that their Deposit Bank Account information has been submitted and is up-to-date through the Student Menu in Minerva.
 - Provide the following information to employee **submitting the Request for an Advance for Someone Else:**
 - Their Student McGill ID
 - The Destination City, Province/State and Country
 - The start and return dates
 - The type of advance requested (whether out of pocket in advance of trip, third party pre-payment or cash advance)
 - The Purpose (whether Travel, Participant Fee in a research/clinical study, Field Advance, Petty Cash Advance)
 - Description (Describe Purpose for the Request; e.g. the name of the conference without acronyms. NOTE: if requesting a cash advance greater than \$5000, a breakdown of estimated costs is required)
 - Canadian Amount being requested (except in case of Third Party Payment, see below)
 - The Fund code (FOAPAL) to be charged
 - If Third-Party Payment, must provide the following information:
 - Whether the Claimant is a resident outside of Canada (Yes/No)
 - The Last Name/Vendor Name of the Third Party and if Third Party is an individual, the First Name of the Third Party
 - Payment Details (e.g. Conference registration details, Invoice numbers)
 - Cheque Currency Type
 - The Amount
 - The Address of the Third Party-street address, City, Province/State, Country, Postal code/zip code, phone number, email address
 - The Employee will enter the information, Submit the request, Print a hard copy of the request. Employee will note the **reference number** of the request when submitted.
 - **The Student is responsible for obtaining the signature of the Principal Investigator.**
 - **The Student will return the Signed Form to the employee who will send the signed form, along with the reference number to traveldeskhhelp.acct@mcgill.ca**