

HARVARD UNIVERSITY



Flight Checklist when using Federal or Cost Share Funds

Last Revised: October 1, 2019

Responsible Office: Office for Sponsored Programs

Introduction

Any expenses charged to federal or cost share / companion accounts must follow federal regulations. This includes expenses incurred by trainees, students, consultants or other non-Harvard University personnel, including international collaborators and consultants.

Harvard strongly encourages travelers to book airline tickets through one of [Harvard's preferred travel agencies](#) and to use [preferred airlines](#). Preferred agencies and airline vendors may provide additional value (e.g., 24-hour hotline, fee discounts, free priority seating, boarding or re-accommodation), etc. See the [Travel Policy](#) and FAQ for additional guidance.

Prior to incurring expenses on federal or cost-share funds, be sure to confirm that:

- the expenses are appropriate;
- the expenses are allowable (i.e., budgeted);
- the expenses fall within the award period.

Air Carrier Requirements

U.S Flag Air Carrier

When using federal or cost share funds you must use U.S. flag air carriers or flights operated under a [U.S. code share agreement](#) to travel to any destination, including international destinations, regardless of the cost comparison with a foreign air carrier. If a U.S. flag air carrier does not travel to your final destination or does not provide service on a portion of your route, you may use a foreign air carrier only on the leg(s) for which U.S. service is unavailable. See below.

Non-U.S. Flag Air Carrier

If a U.S. flag air carrier does not travel to your final destination or does not provide service on a portion of your route, you may use a foreign air carrier only on the leg(s) for which U.S. service is unavailable. These exceptions, along with few others, must be documented and approved within the submitted [Fly America Travel Reimbursement Exception Form \(FATREF\)](#) in order to be considered for reimbursement on a federal award.

Flight Class

Purchased lowest economy airfare

Harvard defines lowest economy class airfare (sometimes called coach, standard economy fare class or base airfare) to include a reserved seat, one personal item, one carry-on bag, and one checked bag. Where there is a high likelihood that the itinerary may change; it is appropriate to purchase a refundable (unrestricted) ticket. Include in the business purpose section of the reimbursement request the reason for purchasing a refundable ticket. Additional travel information and policies can be found at [Travel and Reimbursement Services](#) or the [Financial Policy Office](#).

Did not purchase lowest economy airfare

Airfare in excess of the lowest economy fare are unallowable except when it would:

- Require circuitous routing;
- Require travel during unreasonable hours;
- Excessively prolong travel;
- Result in additional costs that would offset the transportation savings; or
- Offer accommodations not reasonably adequate for the traveler's medical needs. A doctor's note is required.

Exceptions to lowest economy airfare meet one of the criteria above and must include a completed [Federal Lowest Economy Airfare Travel Reimbursement Exception Form](#) as well as comparable flight documentation with prior approval by a designated school official. Flight comparison documentation

must be obtained within one business day of booking a flight and must include the comparison date, complete itinerary of the ticket purchased and the economy ticket comparison (airline, flight number, travel date/time, fare class and price for both). If the comparable price documentation is not obtained within 1 business day of booking the entire fare must be charged to a non-sponsored account.