



Texas A&M University Qatar

Title: TAMUQ Policy on Vacation, Leave and Travel Coordination

Policy Statement and Purpose:

To provide details, guidance and clarification to TAMUQ faculty and staff on the use and combination of vacation, deployment/re-deployment leave, compensatory time and business travel – and the means for obtaining approval of same.

Implementation & Dates of Modification:

- Modified March 15, 2009
 - Modified November 1, 2008
 - Implemented July 1, 2008
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Who Should Read This Policy?

Everyone who uses or approves usage of business travel, leave and vacation at TAMUQ.

Contacts:

TAMUQ Human Resources Services
TAMUQ Assistant Dean for Finance and Administration - CFO

Added Policy Guidance – Effective April 1, 2009

Leave Guidance and Policy during the Summer Break

Policy guidance for travel during the summer period each year, between the end of the Spring Semester and the start of the Fall Semester, has been lacking and this has caused confusion and improper leave and business travel management. In the past, many faculty and staff have used the summer period to work on research professional development and/or collaboration with colleagues at main campus and elsewhere, without regard to normal leave constraints and authorizations. In order to clarify limits and responsibilities, the following guidance is provided for all TAMUQ employees.

- The general expectation is that the leave portion of summer trips should be planned and limited to 3 weeks duration or less. Extended trips with multiple purposes and destinations should be coordinated in detail and well in advance with your Director/Program Coordinator. These TAMUQ officials are authorized to deny and/or modify requested travel, as necessary.
- Summer trips should be coordinated and requested on the T&L form at least 6 weeks in advance of the anticipated travel. Travelers should not commit to ANY costs of the proposed travel unless and until the proposed T&L has been approved. You should note that Program Coordinators/Directors may need as much as 2 weeks to determine whether your plans – when considered in conjunction with the leave requests of others in your department – allow the department to have adequate staffing throughout the summer in order to remain operationally responsive and effective.
- Please note that the airfare cost sharing policy provisions for combined business and personal travel, that were implemented on November 1, 2008 remain in effect and apply to summer travel.
- All TAMUQ Directors and Program Coordinators are responsible for implementing these guidelines within their respective units prior to the end of the 2008/2009 academic year. Directors and Program Coordinators are ultimately responsible for assuring the adequate ongoing operational effectiveness of their departments.

The following policy and processes became effective at TAMUQ on November 1, 2008.

Airfare Cost Sharing for Combined Business & Personal Travel

Policy: TAMUQ has always supported the combination of business and personal travel, in view of the distances that most TAMUQ employees are from their home or point of origin. The policy change being implemented with this communication is that the cost of such

combined trips may now need to be paid from both personal and TAMUQ funds, in a manner that is reasonably consistent with the nature of the time being spent away from Doha.

Accordingly, requests for travel that involve (1) ten or more working days, and (2) combined business and personal purposes must be documented on a separate T&L form that includes a special-purpose daily itinerary form. This form provides an Excel template which will calculate (in a defined manner) the allocation of days between business and personal time. The form and template must be used as provided, without modifications, so that there is a clear calculation of business days and personal days for the total trip.

The template will calculate the extent to which the airfare for the proposed trip will be funded by TAMUQ and the extent to which airfare costs will be your own personal responsibility. This policy change provides that a combined business and personal trip, where the business portion is to be 50% or more, will be fully funded by TAMUQ. Conversely, if the calculated business portion is less than 50%, you will be responsible for paying the personal days' share of the airfare. As an example, if a 14 day trip calculates to be 42.85% business, you will be responsible to pay for the personal 57.15% share of the airfare.

Discussion – This policy is based on essential fairness and anticipates an ability to justify the allocation of costs on such combined purpose trips to auditors both in Doha and on the main campus. This fundamental change is also driven by travel budget constraints due to the growth of the university over the past two years. As a much larger and more complex organization that spends somewhere around 98 or 99 percent of the annual budget, we can no longer sustain the travel support that we have been able to provide in the past.

The template provided will result in clear and consistently reasonable business/personal travel calculations for almost all planned trips. You may appeal to the appropriate Associate or Assistant Dean in cases where the calculation yields no more than a one day difference between the business and personal portions of the trip. However, such appeals should be made only if based on the existence of special circumstances which you believe are not adequately considered in the calculating template. One possible example may be trips with more than two business destinations.

It has always been the understanding and expectation that costs for hotels, rental cars and meals on combined-purpose trips should be allocated on a daily basis depending on the nature (business or personal) of that day's activities. This expectation does not change.

This policy was implemented on July 1, 2008

General:

TAMUQ supports and encourages the use of personal vacation, compensatory time and deployment/re-deployment leave in conjunction with business travel to help alleviate the demands and pressures of living and working in Qatar.

This policy statement is provided primarily to aid TAMUQ faculty and staff in understanding and properly combining the use of leave and its use in conjunction with business travel.

Deployment/ReDeployment Leave (dep-redep):

This is probably the most confusing and misunderstood type of leave associated with an assignment at TAMUQ. One of the reasons for this is that dep-redep is only authorized for TAMUQ faculty and staff. It is, therefore, not found or accounted for in the University Leave Traq system. Dep-redep is allocated, requested and approved for use in the TAMUQ Human Resource Information System (HRIS), which is accessed through the NetID system, from the TAMUQ Web site.

| Here are some general guidelines, which surround the dep-redep paradigm:

- Each employee is allocated 10 days, or 80 hours of dep-redep each year. Half of these are deployment leave and the other half are redeployment leave. As a general rule, when using deployment leave, it should be used at the beginning of the trip, upon departure from Qatar for vacation or business travel. When used at the end of an overseas trip, before returning to work, redeployment leave is appropriately used.
- Dep-redep is allocated at the start of each employee's contract, and is reallocated at the start of each additional year of the contract except for the final year of employment with TAMUQ. For example, if your contract start date is June 30, 2007, then you were allocated 10 days/80 hours of dep-redep for use during the upcoming year. Your next year's allocation of dep-redep will occur on July 1, 2008. Dep-redep is a "use it or lose it" type of leave. In the example above, any unused dep-redep on June 30, 2008 is forfeited, as it cannot be carried forward into the next employment year.
- Dep-redep may only be used when an employee is actually leaving the country of Qatar. It is not authorized for use as leave time to take a break "in-country". You may use redeployment leave after return to Qatar from an out of country trip, before returning to work
- All 10 (80 hours) days of dep-redep leave, or any lesser combination, may used for any given trip away from Qatar. When used in conjunction with a business trip, the details of use of dep-redep must be included on the Travel & Leave Request Form (T&L).

Vacation:

This document will not replicate all of the details related to regular vacation. The accrual, allocation and requests for use of vacation are all documented, and records kept in the TAMU Leave Traq system.

Some general guidelines related to vacation use by TAMUQ faculty and staff is included below:

- Vacation is authorized for use in conjunction with dep-redep leave.
- Use of vacation should always be included on the T&L form when being used in conjunction with business travel and/or dep-redep leave.

Compensatory Time:

- Compensatory time is normally granted for work performed during a TAMUQ holiday period. This type of compensatory time is granted at the rate of one hour per hour worked and must be taken within twelve months of earning the compensatory time.
- All Compensatory Leave must be recorded in Leave Traq, and requested for use in Leave Traq. Managers and Supervisors are not authorized to grant “off the books” compensatory time.

Leave Traq & HRIS:

- All TAMUQ employees who are paid through the University Payroll system (BPP) must use the on-line Leave Traq system to request vacation, sick leave and compensatory time. The system used to request dep-redep is the TAMUQ Human Resources Information System (HRIS).
- Employees not paid through the BPP system use the HRIS to request all of their leave, including dep-redep.

Travel out of the Country:

- When traveling out of Qatar on TAMUQ business, it is imperative that TAMUQ employees use the HRIS to record travel details and provide contact information. This travel information is only accessible by Human Resources staff and is required in case the University needs to get in touch with the employee, while he/she is traveling.
 - For TAMUQ employees who are traveling away from Qatar on personal business, it is strongly recommended that the same type of travel itinerary and contact information be provided, as if on a business trip.
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