



SSARE Travel Guidelines

These guidelines reflect Federal and University of Georgia travel policies for 2025. For questions, contact Kayla Martin, kayla.martin2@uga.edu, 770-412-4787

NOTE: All travel expenditures must be filed within 20 days of the completion of the travel event. Travel reimbursement requests will not be accepted after 20 days.

Travel to SARE-related functions (AC meetings and sustainable ag events, as well as SARE proposal reviews) will be reimbursed from SARE funds. Travel status is referred to as the day of departure from the individual's home base through the date of return to the home base. **The submission of the event's agenda, location, and farm tours and activities related to the event are helpful as justification for reimbursement.**

AIRFARE: Air travel arrangements can be made one of two ways:

1. Airfare can be direct billed to the SARE program by contacting our office so that we can complete the necessary travel paperwork. In order to utilize this arrangement, the travel paperwork must be completed and processed by the reservation deadline date specified by the conference host hotel. If there is a 30-day deadline on making the hotel reservation, then the airfare arrangement assumes the same deadline;
2. The second option for air travel arrangements is for the airfare to be paid directly by the participant and reimbursed through the normal reimbursement process. We encourage participants to book their airfare early for the best pricing. Reimbursement will only be in the amount for a ticket purchased by the 14-day advance. In the event there is a charge for the checked luggage, SARE will reimburse for the maximum of **one (1)** piece of checked luggage. **Original airfare and checked baggage receipts are mandatory. Receipts must be in the name of the traveler.**

HOTEL: Per diem rates apply to lodging per the website:

<https://www.gsa.gov/perdiem>. **Note: Per University of Georgia policy, only hotels/motels are allowable lodging establishments for reimbursement. Businesses, such as Airbnb, Vrbo, HomeAway, condos/townhomes, or similar vacation rentals are not allowable lodging services. All travelers need to be aware of this State of Georgia policy and that neither UGA nor USG has the authority to grant exceptions. For UGA to reimburse lodging expenses, travelers must stay at a hotel or motel.** For SARE-hosted meetings, the participant should notify our office with intention of participating so that a "block" of

rooms may be reserved in advance. This provides the participant with discounted room rates for reservations made prior to the deadline date specified by the hotel. If not, the participant will pay the increased rates. If the participant is traveling to a function on behalf of SARE, the participant is responsible for the hotel reservations and is required to pay hotel charges. Reimbursement is made through SARE's travel reimbursement procedures. If the participant incurs miscellaneous charges, only allowable expenditures such as Internet connect fees and telephone charges, within reason, will be reimbursed. Non-business related items, such as stocking the hotel "mini-bar", alcohol, pool-side service, or movies will not be reimbursed. **Original hotel receipts are mandatory, and they must be in the name of the traveler.**

EXTRA DAYS: In general, participants should arrive the evening before a meeting or function and depart on the final event day. However, it may be necessary, depending upon travel time and destination, for participants to require an additional night's stay in the hotel. **SARE will reimburse for this additional night's stay with a valid statement of justification to be included with the hotel receipt.**

MEALS: Generally, receipts for meals are not required and are paid via per diem. Per diem rates apply to meals per the website: <https://www.gsa.gov/perdiem> Upon visiting the website, look for the city and state where the meeting is being held and subtract the incidentals (incidentals are not reimbursable). Some meals may be provided as part of the event function. No per diem rate will be reimbursed for those particular meals. In the circumstance where a continental breakfast may be included and the participant decides to eat an earlier or healthier breakfast, the participant should save the receipt and that person will be reimbursed up to the per diem rate for that meal. **For travel in the state of Georgia, the University of Georgia meal per diem rate must be used. Contact SARE for these meal rates.**

While on travel status, SARE will reimburse up to the per diem for three meals per day (with the exception of host-catered meals). NOTE: On the day of departure and day of return (first and last days), only 75 percent of the daily per diem rate will be reimbursed. To calculate the 75 percent rate, multiply the per diem rate by 0.75. SARE does not reimburse for alcohol or one individual for a group (2 or more) meal. In cases where the server has placed the entire table order on one ticket, separate tickets must be requested to obtain a receipt for reimbursement.

SHUTTLE/PARKING/TAXI/MASS TRANSIT/TOLL CHARGES/USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE: Select the most convenient and economical way to travel. Mileage for use of a personal vehicle is reimbursed at the rate extended to UGA staff (\$0.70/mile for 2025), and the participant should report actual business mileage for reimbursement. Mileage is not reimbursed when using a rental. An expense for mileage associated with a rental cannot be claimed in addition to a rental expense. Fuel expenses will only be paid when accompanying a rental vehicle expense. Participants can be reimbursed for transportation services, such as taxi/Uber, mass transit, or airport shuttles, as well as toll charges, and airport/hotel parking. **Original receipts for public transportation, rental vehicles, parking, tolls, and fuel are mandatory. If a public transportation service does not offer receipts, do not use it if one wishes to be reimbursed for the charges. Receipts must be in the name of the original traveler.**

Justification may be required if transportation receipts are not clear that the travel was business-related.

NOTE: The State of Georgia has mandatory statewide contracts with specified car rental suppliers (Hertz or Enterprise) for travel within the Continental U.S. UGA requires renting vehicles from these providers when renting a vehicle is the preferred or most advantageous mode of transportation.

REGISTRATION: There are two options when paying for SARE-related registration:

1. One option is to have the registration directly paid by SARE;
2. The second option is done as a reimbursable expense. If registration is paid by the participant, original registration receipts must be submitted to SARE for reimbursement. If the participant wishes for SARE to pay for the registration directly, all necessary paperwork must be submitted to SARE in a timely fashion to allow time for processing.

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES: At times, there are circumstances which warrant expenses not referenced above that, if allowable, can be reimbursed to the participant. However, in order to determine eligibility, statements of explanation and/or justifications are required and included with all original receipts. Hotel internet charges, or SARE-related business services such as printing or copying services for materials, would be examples.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FORMS: In order to receive travel expense reimbursement, all of the following forms must be completed and e-mailed to the SSARE Program Office, along with all original receipts (**copies of receipts attached to email are acceptable, however, all travel forms and receipts MUST BE CLEAR AND LEGIBLE. If any documents are deemed illegible, they will be returned for correction, which will delay reimbursement processing time. Errors, missing/incorrect information, and missing receipts will also delay the processing of reimbursement.**

1. Registration in the UGA Supplier Database (completed online in the Supplier Database at <https://suppliers.uga.edu>); one-time only form;
2. SSARE Travel Expense Form completed and signed;
3. Non-employee Payment Form (required for all non-UGA employee payments regardless of type);
4. A copy of the event agenda or brochure showing the name of the event, location, dates, and the itinerary of the event;
5. ORIGINAL receipts for all expenses claimed (except for meals and mileage). **All receipts must be in the name of the attendee per the travel policy.**

If reimbursement is being paid directly to the participant's organization, an invoice on letterhead must be mailed, in addition to items 1, 2, and 4 above, along with all original receipts.

NOTE: All travel expenditures must be filed within 20 days of the completion of the travel event. Reimbursement requests will not be accepted after 20 days.

NOTE: For travel reimbursement purposes, all 50 U.S. states are considered domestic travel. The 16 U.S. territories and commonwealths, including

Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, are also considered domestic travel.

International travel is not allowed.

SSARE Travel Non-Allowable Items

As a USDA-funded program housed at the University of Georgia, Southern SARE must adhere to USDA and UGA guidelines on allowable and non-allowable expenses. The following list is provided as a reference for the most frequently asked questions as they relate to items that are non-reimbursable on SSARE travel. This list does not include entirely or comprehensively all non-allowable items.

NOTE: All travel expenditures must be filed within 20 days of the completion of the travel event. Travel reimbursement requests will not be accepted after 20 days.

The following items are non-reimbursable on SSARE travel:

- Any non-business related items or activities; any items or activities not associated with the event you are attending as a SARE representative.
- Transportation to and/or from restaurants for meals outside the event hours (i.e., travel for lunch during breaks or travel to dinner after the event ends would be considered personal time and non-reimbursable).
- Airfare costs in excess of the basic least expensive unrestricted accommodations class offered by commercial airlines are unallowable except when not reasonably adequate for the traveler's medical needs. This condition must be justified and documented on a case-by-case basis and approved prior to booking.

When mixing official travel with personal travel, the traveler must pay for all costs not related to official SARE business.

Other non-reimbursable items include:

- Alcohol purchases;
- Personal activities/trips outside of business activities/business agendas;
- Childcare services;
- Lobbying/fundraising activities;
- Personal protection equipment;
- Any entertainment activities outside of business/activities/business agendas. This includes amusement, diversion, and social activities, and any associated costs;
- Tickets to shows or sporting events;
- Meal per diem when the meal is provided by the event;
- Meal incidentals;
- Mileage when using a rental;
- One individual paying for a group (2 or more) meal;
- Compensation for injuries to persons or loss, theft, or damage to property;
- Documents/receipts that are in someone else's name other than the recipient;

- International travel;
- Non-business related hotel purchases such as hotel “mini-bar”, alcohol, pool-side service, movies;
- Lodging accommodations that don’t adhere to UGA policy. **Per University of Georgia, those who travel as SARE representatives must adhere to this lodging policy:**

Only hotels/motels are allowable lodging establishments for reimbursement. Businesses, such as Airbnb, Vrbo, HomeAway, condos/townhomes, or similar vacation rentals are not allowable lodging services. All travelers need to be aware of this State of Georgia policy and that neither UGA nor USG has the authority to grant exceptions. For UGA to reimburse lodging expenses, travelers must stay at a hotel or motel. For travel reimbursement purposes, all 50 U.S. states are considered domestic travel. The 16 U.S. territories and commonwealths, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, are also considered domestic travel.

If you have an expense that you feel may be reimbursable that does not fall under the above non-allowable items, you may submit a justification as to how it relates to the business being conducted as a SARE representative, along with all original receipts for review. Submission does not guarantee approval. It may be approved or denied taking into consideration both USDA and UGA policy or guidelines. If you foresee an expense in question, it is encouraged that you inquire with SSARE before travel to ensure the expense is reimbursable.

Updated September 2025